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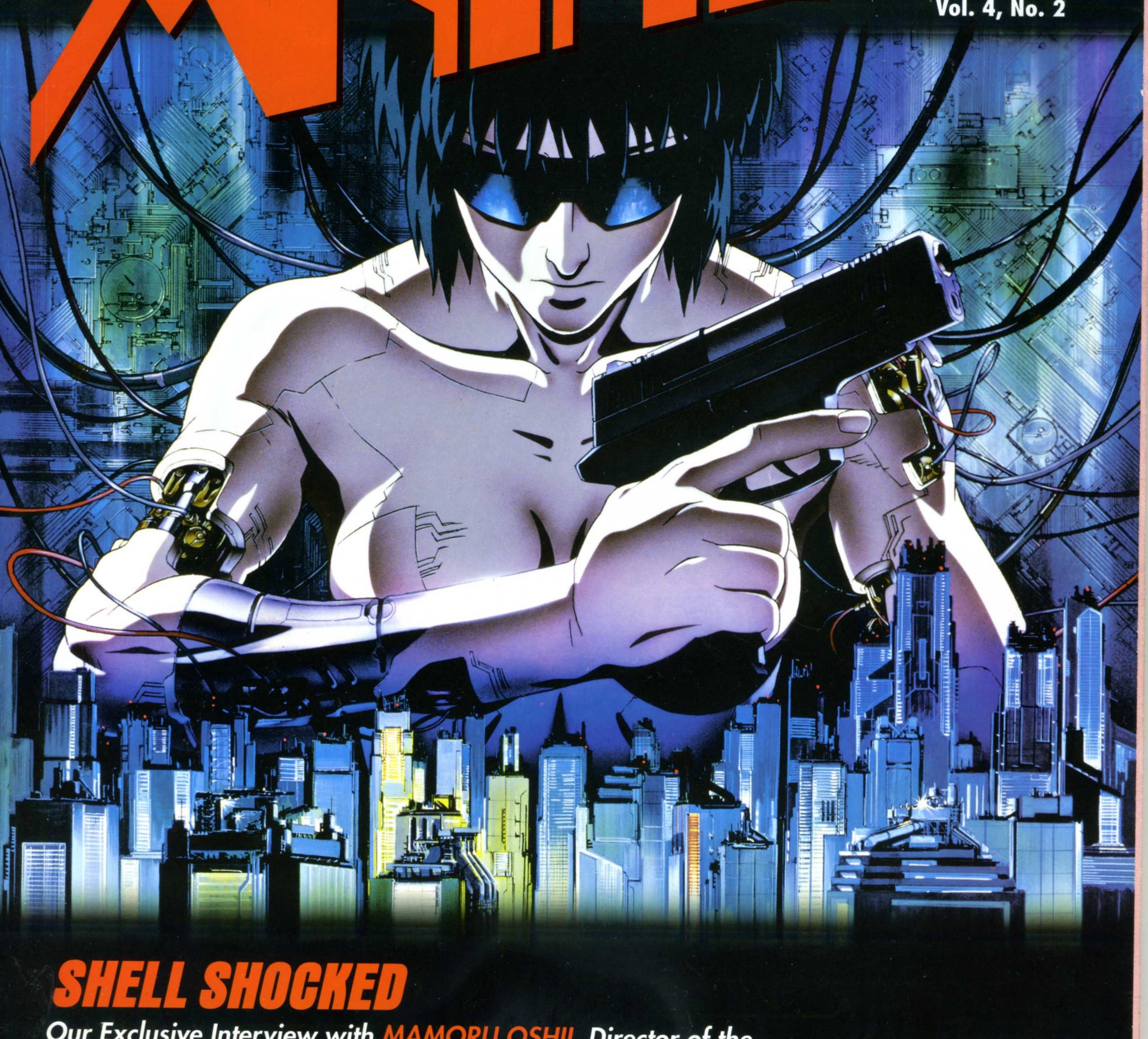
Anime & Manga Monthly

# ANIMERICA

Vol. 4, No. 2



## SHELL SHOCKED

Our Exclusive Interview with MAMORU OSHII Director of the Feature-Length Cyber-Shocker GHOST IN THE SHELL

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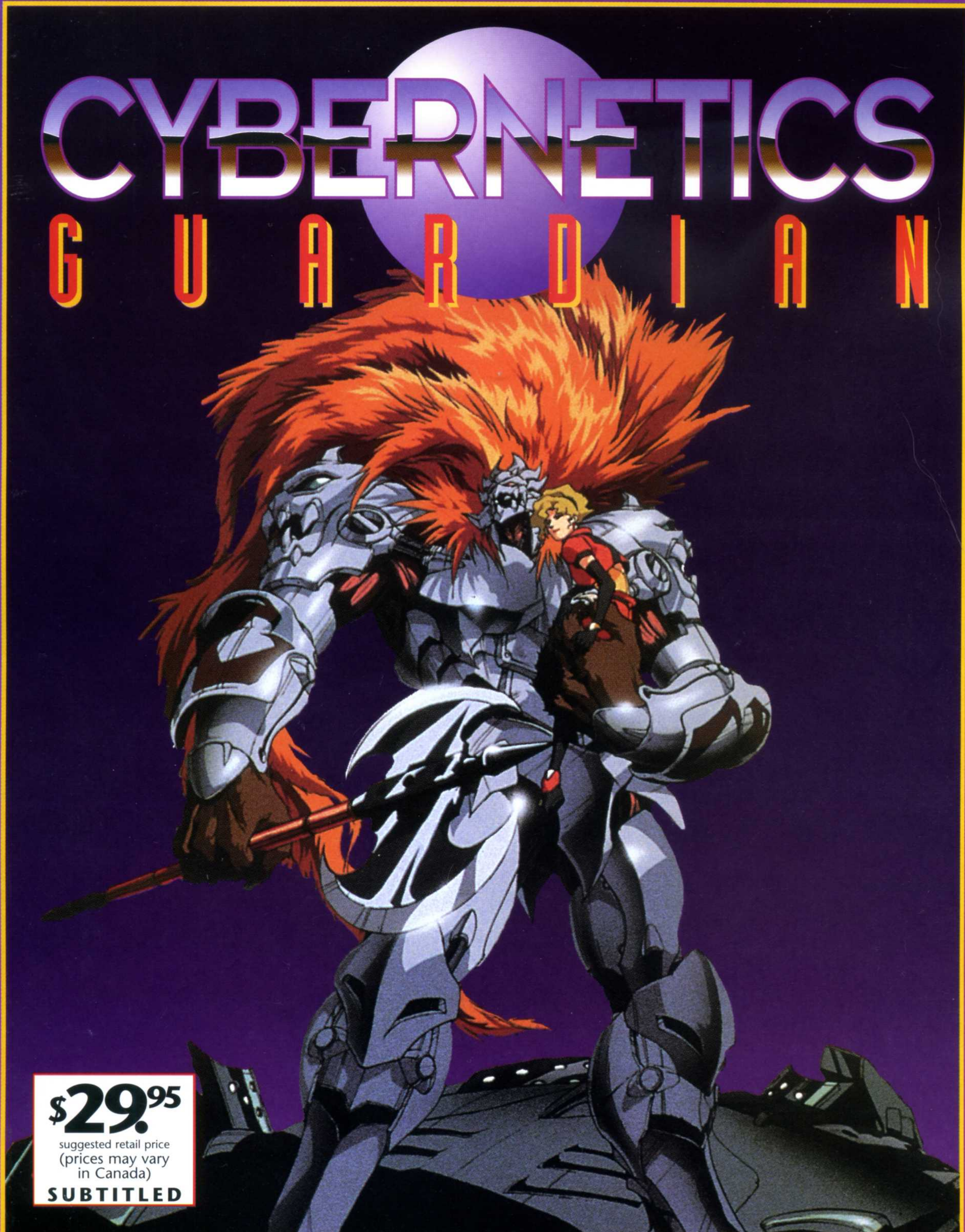

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ANIMERICA

Vol. 4, No. 2

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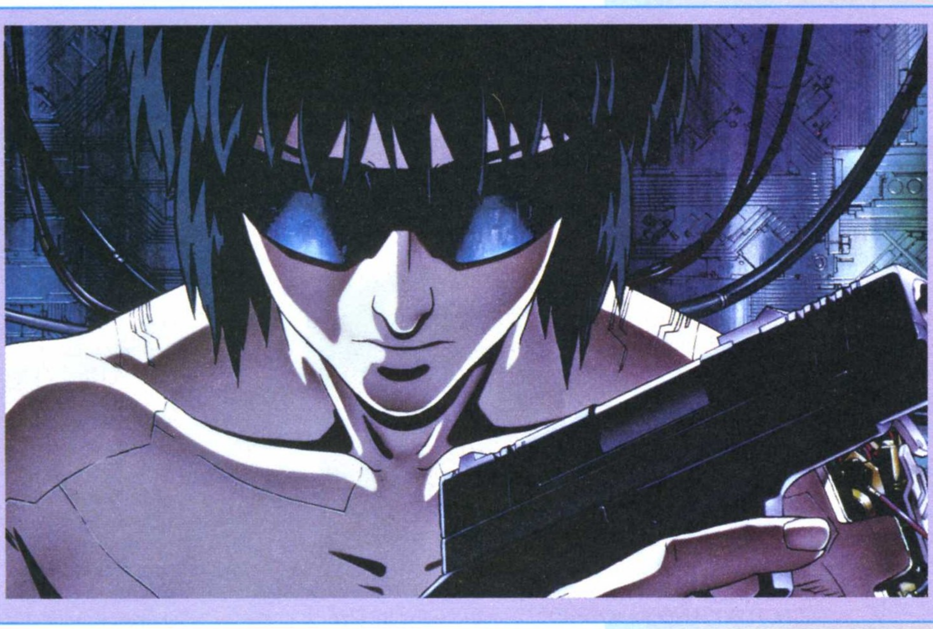

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### SHELL SHOCKED

ANIMERICA takes aim at one of the most eagerly anticipated anime films in years, the theatrical feature **GHOST IN THE SHELL**, based on the story by the manga master of cyberpunk, Masamune Shirow. The future is in cyberspace, and virtual reality is the only reality you can really count on....

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*Journey with us to a land of cyberpunk dreams of near-future nightmares as ANIMERICA talks to* ***GHOST IN THE SHELL****'s* ***MAMORU OSHII****, the wide-awake and dreaming anime director who navigates through the ruins of both reality and dreams with an equally sure hand* ........................................................4

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# FROM THE EDITOR

## Even *good* guys blow it.

© Sega

Those of you who are ANIMERICA Gaffe Squad regulars (and *you* know who you are) are generally quick to write in with the errors and boo-boo's you've spotted in the latest issue. Since we've instituted our "You Name It, You Claim It" policy (i.e., the first person to write in on a postcard with the duly noted gaffe gets the prize), there've been a few less cards recently, but we still get enough to know that your eternal vigilance has not slackened, that you're still there keeping us honest (and boy! some of you sure are a little more, uh…"vigilant"…than others).

That's why it's been such a surprise that we've yet to receive (so far, at least) any Gaffe Squad entries regarding the spellings printed for the upcoming ***VIRTUA FIGHTER*** anime series. If you've ever studied a little Japanese, you know that the ways to romanize Japanese are limited only by your imagination, and that, at least from a linguistic point of view, spelling the name of the too-cool pilot of the red Zaku as "Sha" rather than "Char" is technically correct (not so with the often-seen "shoujou" for "*shôjo* manga," the final vowel being not "long" but "short," and for that matter, what's the point of writing it with that silly "u" when there's no possible way for the word's long "o" to be mispronounced in romanization anyway? but that's an editorial for another day).

Ahem. In other words, we're surprised that none of you ***VIRTUA FIGHTER*** fans out there haven't written in, duly chastising us for printing Lion "Wooden Boy" Lafale's name as "Lyon Lafalle," or Pai Chan as "Pai Chen" ("Chen," we're told, is the Taiwanese spelling of her name, which is spelled "Chan" in Hong Kong), or even Shun Di ("Shun Ti").

The thing is, back when we prepared the article, none of us had actually *played* any of the games in the ***VIRTUA FIGHTER*** series, and so we'd no idea that the spellings had already been standardized by the U.S. manufacturers of the game. Now that we *have* been playing it—and, I must warn you, I play a fairly mean Sarah Bryant—we humbly acknowledge our feet of virtual clay and confess our error. Hey! what can we say. Even *good* guys blow it.

☆☆☆☆☆

Unless you count the various ailments and complaints suffered by our hard-working art director, Yoshi Higuchi, I now have the dubious honor of announcing the first anime-related occupational injury on the ANIMERICA staff—a real, live, honest-to-goodness *sprained neck*!

Yes, it's true, all those late nights and weekends these past two extra-spectacular issues have taken their toll. Stupidly stoic as always, I tried to ignore the hot, angry pain in my neck and shoulder which felt sometimes like superheated steel cables, and other times, superheated steel cables with sharp, pointy little barbs. But when I was no longer able to lift my arm above my head or even heft a pot o' joe to the counter, I knew I had to seek professional help.

To make a long story short, several chiropractic appointments later, I'm told that I'm "doing much better," although I'm still far from 100%. The ice packs (one of which I have on my shoulder right now, as we speak) are helping, as is the fact that I've completed work on my very first book, ***THE COMPLETE ANIME GUIDE: JAPANESE VIDEO DIRECTORY AND RESOURCE***, co-authored with ***THE WHOLE TOON ACCESS***' Doug Ranney, on sale now from Tiger Mountain Press (plug! plug!). In other words, if you should see me at an upcoming convention with some weird blue pack strapped to my neck and shoulder, you'll know why.

☆☆☆☆☆

As you may have already figured out, as of this month Rumiko Takahashi's ***ONE-POUND GOSPEL*** manga series will no longer be in ANIMERICA, and will soon be appearing in its own monthly book, starting March. I'm glad we've had the chance to run the series, if only for a little while, in our 'zine; if nothing else, it helped to introduce a charming series which might otherwise have been difficult for many readers to get into.

But every cloud, as they say, has its silver lining, and with ***ONE-POUND GOSPEL***'s move to its own monthly book, that means ANIMERICA will now have that many more pages to devote to expanded news, reviews, and interview sections, as well as some brand-new ones, such as our hit "Sound Bites" department, which features mini-interviews with some of the English-speaking voice-actor industry's most talented stars. Other features will include expanded line art sections, more "mini features" such as our piece on the live-action ***CRYING FREEMAN*** in Vol. 3, No. 10; more behind-the-scenes pieces on currently on-air anime such as ***SAILOR MOON***, ***TEKNOMAN***, and ***DRAGON BALL*** (look for an exclusive interview with Goku's voice-actor-in-English, Saffron Henderson, in an upcoming issue!).

In other words, we truly do believe the best is yet to come.

trish

Trish Ledoux
Editor

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## Contributors

Manga scholar **Matt Thorn** (Girls' Stuff), fresh from his field research for his doctoral dissertation on *shôjo* manga, returns to our pages this month with a three-part history of manga, tracing the development of the genre from "gag" strips in ancient scrolls to Osamu Tezuka's modern-day cinematic mold.

Associate editor **Carl Gustav Horn** (Anime Feature) not only handles our ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** feature interview, but also tackles the story of fans-turned-pros Studio Gainax starting this month in his exhaustive four-part interview with "Otaking" Toshio Okada, complete with rigorously researched background scoops. Whew!

Most-excellent graphic designer and ***CRYING FREEMAN*** fan **Andrea Rice** has gleefully added her touch to the layout of our pages since last summer, and admits to being delighted with her transformation into a comic book character, although her mother has complained about it on more than one occasion.

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# Let Us Tell You a Story...

THE NEW ANIME GOTHIC.™

# OGRE SLAYER 2
## Grim Fairy Tales

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In ***"CHAPTER OF AN OGRE'S LAMENT,"*** the mysterious swordsman known only by the name of his sword goes back to the days of Meiji Era Japan, a chaotic time of upheaval and progress when guns were as common as samurai swords. A young servant girl attached to a wealthy household succumbs to the bittersweet words of hate whispered in her ear by a venomous ogre-woman, bringing on a bloodbath which will create consequences for generations. In modern-day Yokohama, Ogre Slayer meets another servant girl, one whose innocence seems proof against an ogre's hate…or love. *"We're the same, you and I. We go through life hiding our sadness. But all the while, we're crying inside."*

***THE NEW ANIME GOTHIC.™***

# ONE GREW EAST… ONE GREW WEST… ONE GREW OVER THE KUNO'S NEST.

# Ranma ½
## OAV Series
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In ***"TEAM RANMA vs. THE LEGENDARY PHOENIX,"*** poetry-spouting high school swordsman Tatewaki "Blue Thunder" Kuno comes into possession of the egg of the legendary phoenix, said to grant its owner incredible powers. "I'm not sayin' I believe in th' darn thing, mind you," says the shop's dubious owner, "but if I'm gonna sell it, it's gonna be on one condition. You must never, *EVER*, under *ANY* circumstances, *PUT THE FOOL THING ON YOUR HEAD*! Y'got that!? *NEVER*!" (You can guess what happens next, can't you?) It was bad enough when the cranky phoenix imprinted boy-type Ranma as its mortal enemy, but now it's after *AKANE*, too! Can Team Ranma prevent the phoenix from pecking them all asunder!?

In ***"OH, CURSED TUNNEL OF LOST LOVE! LET MY LOVE BE FOREVER,"*** local restaurant owners Shampoo and Ukyo are put in charge of organizing the Merchant Association's annual stress-reduction getaway. Neither girl is particularly interested in the task, not until they spot an ad for a spooky haunted cave in the middle of nowhere famous for breaking up any boy-girl couple who enters together. "We wouldn't *DREAM* of separating you two," they say as they push Ranma and Akane forward. Just to be sure, Ukyo also enlists the help of Ryoga, thinking that he'll go along with the great break-up plan for his own reasons. But Ryoga never could deny Akane anything, and when she begs him to go through the tunnel with *HER*, well, things get a little *COMPLICATED*….

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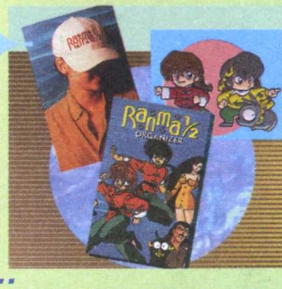

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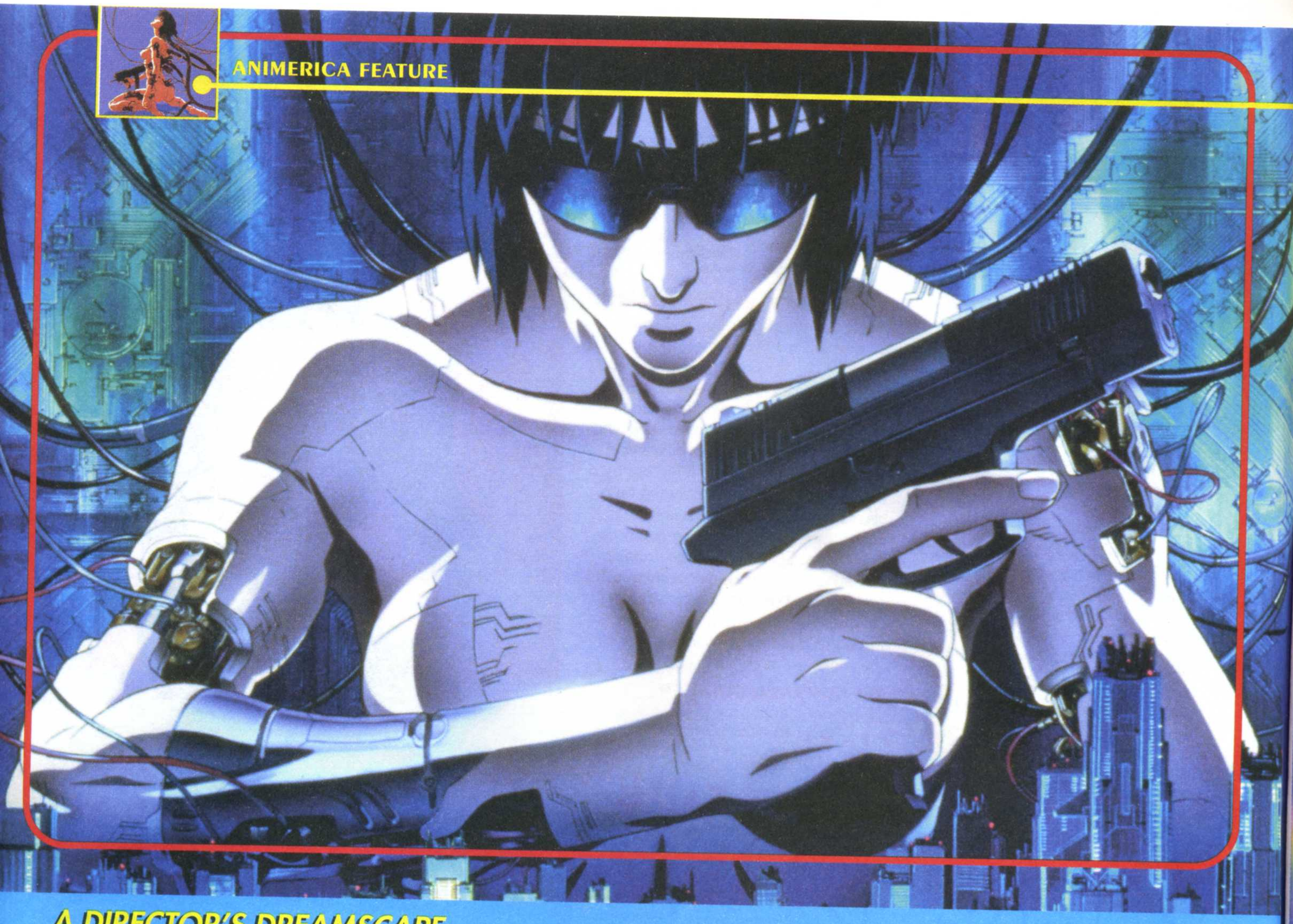

### A DIRECTOR'S DREAMSCAPE

### *The ANIMERICA Interview with Mamoru Oshii*

# SHELL SHOCKED

*Journey with us to a land of cyberpunk dreams of near-future nightmares as ANIMERICA talks to **GHOST IN THE SHELL**'s **Mamoru Oshii**, the wide-awake and dreaming anime director who navigates through the ruins of both reality and dreams with an equally sure hand. Interview by **Carl Gustav Horn***

There's a rumor, which I hope is true, that Mamoru Oshii will be coming to Project A-Kon 7 this year in Dallas, to join the members of Production I.G. that worked with him on his latest film, ***GHOST IN THE SHELL***. At first, I thought he would seem out of place in the town of J.R. and Sue Ellen; while 1994 A-Kon guest and ***LUPIN III*** creator Monkey Punch relished the prospect of getting a good steak, and 1995's demonstrative guest, manga artist Ippongi Bang, seemed the otaku equivalent of a Rebel Yell, Oshii's quietudes, his "dreaming awake," didn't seem, in my mind, to suit Dallas. But then I thought of how Oshii is with cities; how he wanders slowly through them in the ***PATLABOR*** films and ***GHOST***; moving by day and night, by summer and winter, his eyes slowing down their frantic pace, to suggest that what is perceived by a city's inhabitants as the vital bustle of reality is in fact life on the terms of a dream. Oshii himself constructs these scenes before they're ever put on acetate; walking down the rainy streets of Hong Kong and riding flat boats along Tokyo's Sumida River, camera in hand, contemplating. Reality in his films is often symbolized by what looms above the track of dreaming: a shattered bridge, a blimp, a tall building which has been planned for a secret purpose. Below, we move through the streets like a slow motorcade. One more turn, and we will be blown into reality; one more turn, and we will realize that if Oshii dreams awake, he dreams wide-awake. Yes, Oshii and Dallas will indeed understand each other.

As an anime director, Mamoru Oshii made history relatively early in his career with the first of the OAVs (1983's ***MOON STATION DALLOS***), but he has made a name for himself through distinctive motion pictures such as the second ***URUSEI YATSURA*** movie, ***BEAUTIFUL DREAMER*** (1984), which placed on many "Top Ten" anime film lists in the 1980s, and ***ANGEL'S EGG*** (1985), about which the 1986 edition of Genkosha's Animation Video Collectors Guide commented, **"This is animated art rather than story. It could be brought to a Soho gallery theater."** ••• These works already exhibited the elements that would preoccupy Oshii in his career: the symbolic language of dreams, the emergence of reality amidst dreaming, and an epigrammatic use of the Bible. These were also the elements which made mecha and character designer Yutaka Izubuchi (***CHAR'S COUNTERATTACK, GUNDAM 0080***, ***RECORD OF LODOSS WAR***) initially reluctant to take on the unusual Oshii as director for his nascent ***PATLABOR*** project in 1988; reluctance was quickly left behind as ***PATLABOR*** became a success with an OAV series, TV show, and two theatrical films—Oshii's detailed and intense signature style in 1993's ***PATLABOR 2*** led directly to his being tapped to direct the anime adaptation of Masamune Shirow's cyberpunk manga ***GHOST IN THE SHELL***. ••• While ***GHOST*** certainly possesses the dynamic ultra-violence and decayed Asian city background of an ***AKIRA*** (plus the integral element of computer hacking, nowhere to be found in the "cyberpunk" ***AKIRA*** or, for that matter, ***BLADE RUNNER***), it is a film whose protagonists are clearly adults with an adult perspective on the world. Exposition is not given in tiny spoonfuls and met with shrugs as in ***AKIRA***; in ***GHOST*** it is a constant element: in board meetings, in cars, in "casual" conversation; grown-up talk. ••• At the end of ***GHOST IN THE SHELL***, Major Kusanagi recites, after the fashion of Oshii, part of a quote from Corinthians: **"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."** Anime wants to grow up; we see its entertaining achievements, we enjoy its comedic works—but when we see what a director like Oshii is capable of doing, we realize that as a medium it is capable of maturing and developing its own genre of truly adult films—not just scattered jewels over the years, but a strong, steady stream. Oshii dreams not only in the service of fantasy, but also wide-awake; he uses the medium as the Impressionists did painting—not the photo-realistic copying of reality of the live-action camera eye, but the tone and line of painting that showed aspects of reality the obviousness of the camera could not, the stains of color that reveal hidden details. To contemplate Mamoru Oshii's works is to complete that same Corinthians quote, as it may one day apply to anime as a whole: **"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am also known."**

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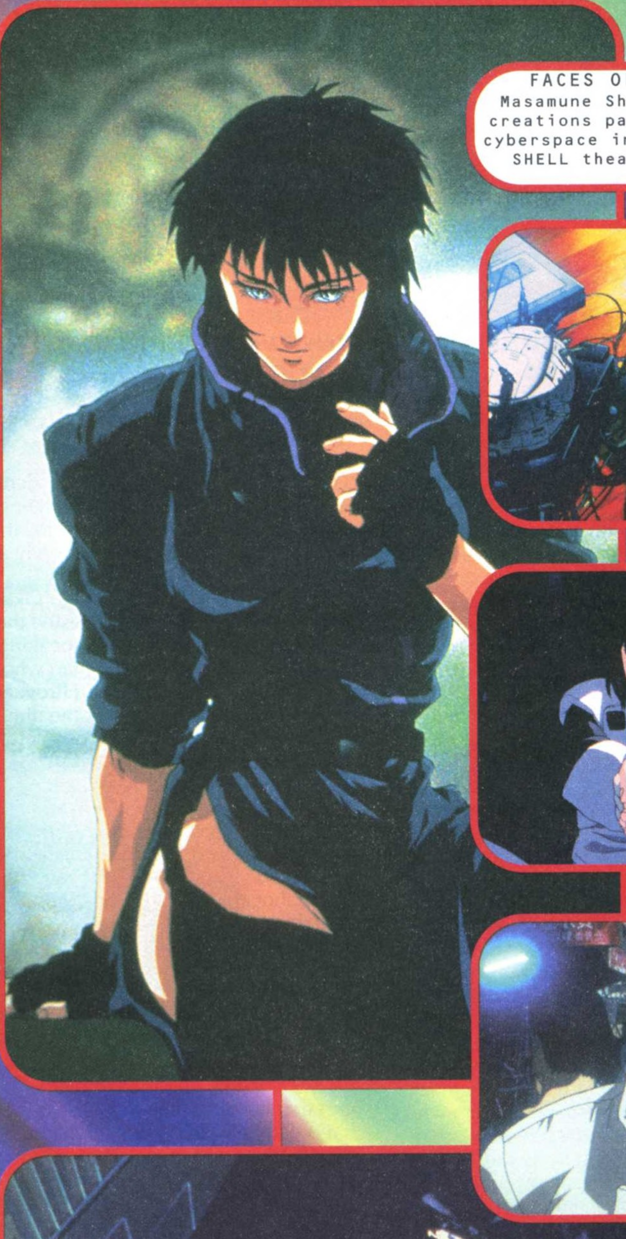


FACES OF THE FUTURE

Masamune Shirow's cyberpunk creations patrol the city and cyberspace in the GHOST IN THE SHELL theatrical feature.

**otaku:** (oh-TAH-koo) *n.* Term used to refer to fanatical devotees of anime or manga. Japanese speakers might use this term in a pejorative sense to denote someone lacking in social graces and breadth who is obsessive about a certain subject.
***—The Complete Anime Guide***

# The Conscience Of The OTAKING

## The Studio Gainax Saga in Four Parts

*As Mel Brooks once said, "It's good to be the King." In our exclusive four-part interview, ANIMERICA talks with the best-known otaku in Japan, the original "Otaking,"* ***Toshio Okada****. Join us for the royal saga of the rise and fall and rise again of super-studio Gainax and more industry buzz than Robert Altman's* ***THE PLAYER****. Interview by* ***Carl Gustav Horn***

A stalwart young man in a suit standing in a great corporate skyscraper and declaring that *he* will make the future; a pudgy, plaid-shirted fanboy with the meltdown eyes of madness squatting in a six-mat room, holding up an 8mm camera as if it were the ultimate weapon. Both are scenes from ***OTAKU NO VIDEO***, the searing self-parody created by the legendary anime studio of fans-turned-pro, Gainax. And both are scenes from the life of Gainax's principal founder and president until 1992, Toshio Okada, the otaku among otaku, the Otaking.

"I have been so called in Japan," said Okada, during his recent visit to State College, Pennsylvania's Otakon 1995, where this interview occurred, "half out of respect and half out of ridicule. In Japan, the word 'otaku' is always greeted with negative images, but this common sense does not hold true for the United States. I realized that the genuine pride of Americans who are otaku is nothing but pure and serious." If that is so, it must be in large part due to the true legends Okada himself has written for the American fans: a man who started out selling fanzines in an oversized Char Aznable outfit is now a leading cultural pundit published in the weekly magazine of Japan's largest newspaper; a man who entered college only to join a science-fiction club—dropping out as soon as he did—who now lectures at Japan's most prestigious university.

But Okada's defining moment came when, at the age of twenty-seven, with only a string of clever 8mm anime shorts and live-action SF parodies to his credit as a producer, he talked Japan's multi-billion dollar toy conglomerate Bandai into giving his nascent studio, Gainax, the largest budget ever for a full-length, 35mm anime film: eight hundred million yen for ***THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE***. In the megacorporate halls of Bandai, there were those such as ***WINGS***' co-producer Shigeru Watanabe, who fairly glowed with the infectious idealism of a film whose underlying theme was to be the lift-off of a band of youth who would show the whole world their talent, blazing over the limb of the Earth like a new dawning. That talent was indeed shown in the film, ***THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE***, which swept the Japanese critics' awards and which found a particular acclaim among the anime fans of the United States, but it took until September of 1994, seven years and six months after its initial release, before Bandai finally made its money back.

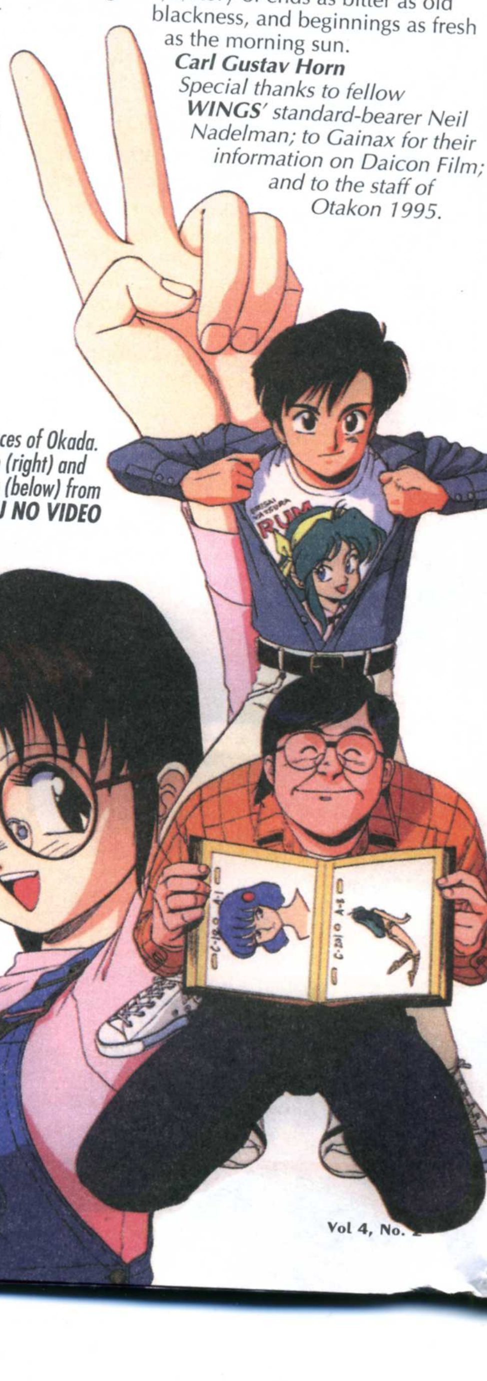
Gainax would go on to modest success with the OAV series ***AIM FOR THE TOP! GUNBUSTER*** and overwhelming mass appeal with the TV show ***NADIA***, but there is no denying that the stunning commercial failure of their greatest achievement always shadowed it—the studio today refers to ***HONNEAMISE*** dryly as their "little-known masterpiece."

When I interviewed Toshio Okada at Otakon 1995, it was as (modestly) the greatest fan of the film in the English-speaking world getting to meet at last with the man who, together with ***WINGS***' writer/director Hiroyuki Yamaga, was the most responsible for the film's very existence. I expected to have some of my otaku-esque questions about its production answered. I did not expect to find Okada taking personal responsibility for ***HONNEAMISE***'s box-office catastrophe, offering revisionist theories on its inherent weaknesses. Charismatic and gregarious, Okada spoke freely and candidly, indifferent to shocking the preconceptions of his American standard-bearer, who, like Eliot's Magi, was beginning to wonder as the evening wore on whether he had come to this little town to experience a birth or a death.

At one moment contrite, and the next fiercely proud of ***HONNEAMISE***, Okada's statements about the film's dubious advertising campaign and marketing plan suggest that it entered the theaters with one hand tied behind its back by others. These recollections and much more are included in this landmark interview, which amount to the largest document on Gainax ever published in the English language. In its four parts, Toshio Okada discusses the very earliest days of Gainax, its seizure of the moment, its life of chaos, its four-year hiatus from anime, and the place it is today—without Okada. Many of his remarks are bound to be controversial, demanding feedback from its other founding members who are still there, such as Yamaga and Hideaki Anno, writer/director of Gainax's first post-Okada anime, the acclaimed new TV series ***NEON GENESIS EVANGELION***. Hopefully, such responses can come to these pages in the future. But for the present, here is Toshio Okada's own amazing story of fans who became giants; a story of ends as bitter as old blackness, and beginnings as fresh as the morning sun.

***Carl Gustav Horn***

*Special thanks to fellow* ***WINGS***' *standard-bearer Neil Nadelman; to Gainax for their information on Daicon Film; and to the staff of Otakon 1995.*



**Two faces of Okada. Kubo (right) and Tanaka (below) from OTAKU NO VIDEO**

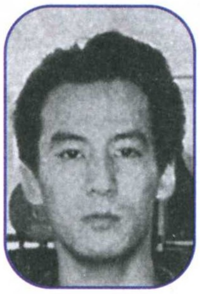
© 1991 Kenichi Sonoda • Gainax • Youmex

## PLAYERS CLUB

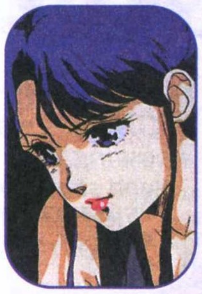
*The names and faces you'll need to know for this installment of the Studio Gainax saga.*

**Hideaki Anno**
ANIMATON DIRECTOR **THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE** • DIRECTOR **GUNBUSTER, NADIA, NEON GENESIS EVANGELION**

**Takami Akai**
CHARACTER DESIGNER **DAICON III AND IV OPENING ANIME** • ASSISTANT DIRECTOR **THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE** • DESIGNER **PRINCESS MAKER**



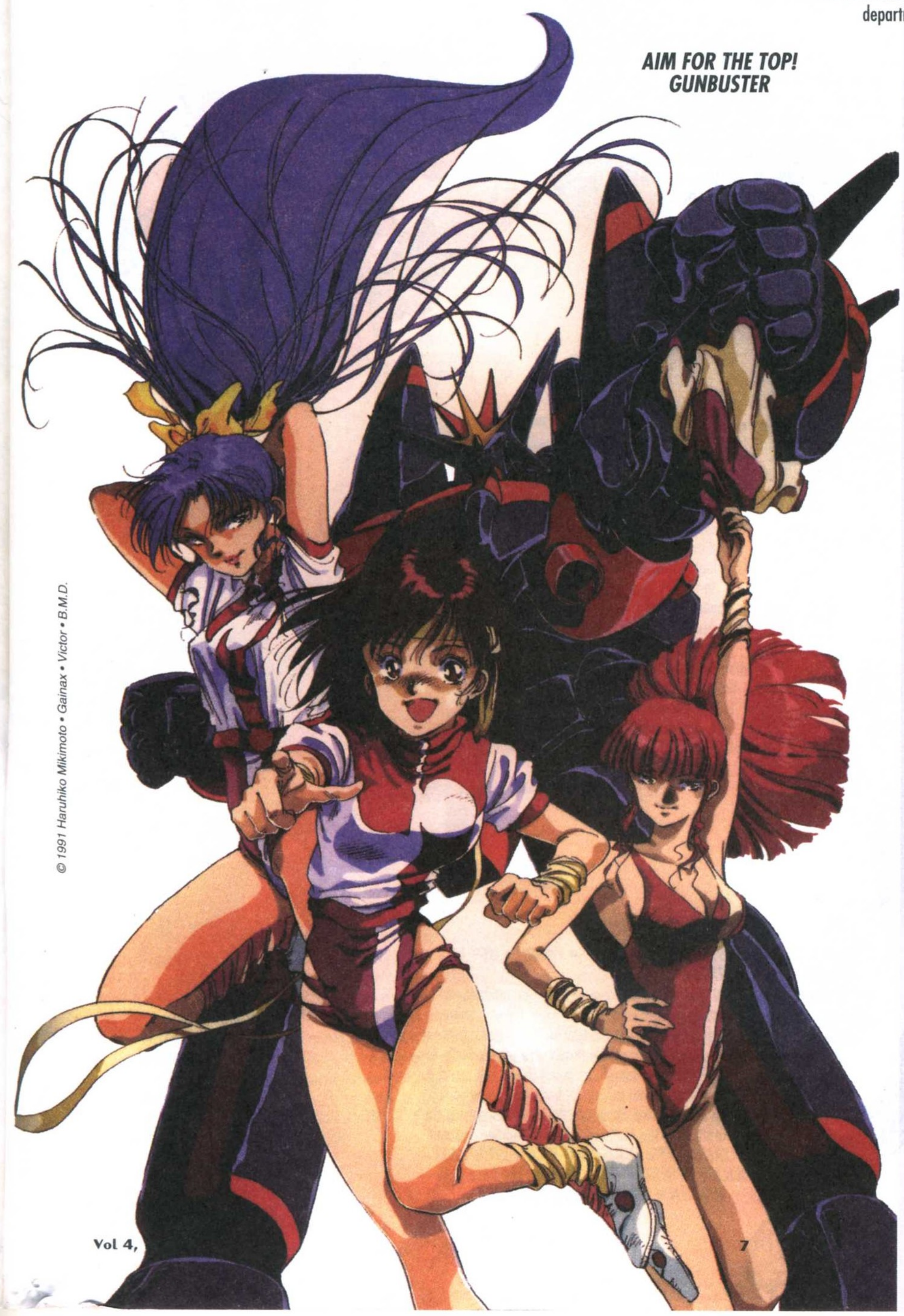
**Mahiro Maeda**
CONTINUITY AND MECHANICAL DESIGN **NADIA** • PRODUCTION DESIGN AND LAYOUT **THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE**



**Kazumi Okada**
Toshio Okada's wife, neé Kazumi Amano, and the inspiration for the character of the same name in ***GUNBUSTER***. Mrs. Okada herself still works at Gainax in their merchandising department.

**Shinji Higuchi**
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR **NADIA, THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE** STORYBOARDS **OTAKU NO VIDEO** • Having left Gainax shortly after Okada's departure, Shinji is currently back at Gainax, doing storyboards on ***NEON GENESIS EVANGELION***.

**Hiroyuki Yamaga**
WRITER AND DIRECTOR **THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE** • PRODUCER **NEON GENESIS EVANGELION**



***AIM FOR THE TOP! GUNBUSTER***

© 1991 Haruhiko Mikimoto • Gainax • Victor • B.M.D.

### PART ONE

*In Part One, Toshio Okada discusses the uncertainty over Gainax's direction and the sense of closure that led to him leaving Gainax, as well as his opinions on the different kind of company Gainax is without him.*

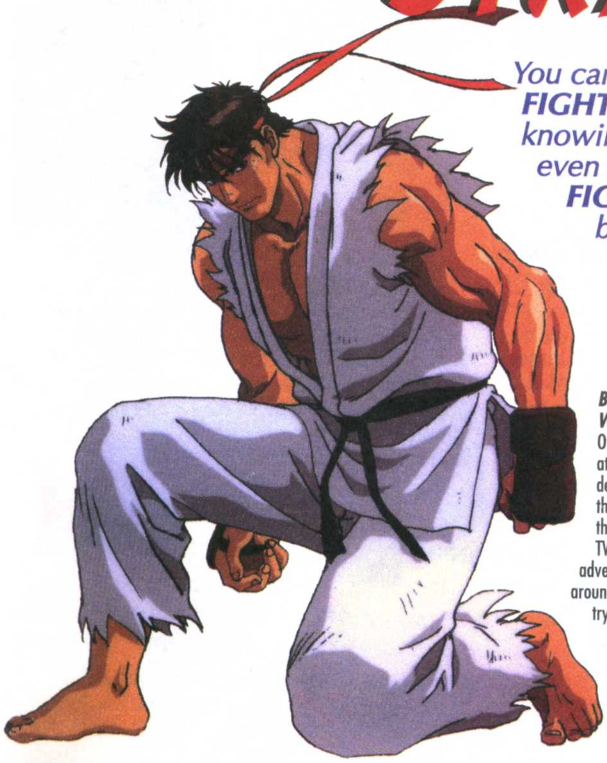
**ANIMERICA**: Why did you leave Gainax?

**Okada**: There are several reasons. Number one was that I had accomplished what I set out to do in animation and computer games. In the beginning, when I made the Daicon III and IV Opening Animation shorts, my dream was to someday make an anime movie, a robot anime and an anime TV series. They're all completed—***HONNEAMISE NO TSUBASA—ORITSU UCHÛGUN*** (***THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE—ROYAL SPACE FORCE***), ***TOP O NERAE!*** (***AIM FOR THE TOP! GUNBUSTER***)—which even now, I think was the best robot anime ever made, and ***FUSHIGI NO UMI NO NADIA*** (*"Nadia of the Mysterious Seas,"* released in English as simply ***NADIA*** or ***THE SECRET OF BLUE WATER***). So there's nothing more for me to *do* in anime. When ***NADIA*** was finished, I thought to myself, maybe that's it. But there was one more thing—producing an anime just about *me*. I sort of wrote the basic script, and then my staff worked on it in secret. Then one day, I hear, "Okay, we've got the rushes! Time for the preview!"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

# STREET FIGHTER II:

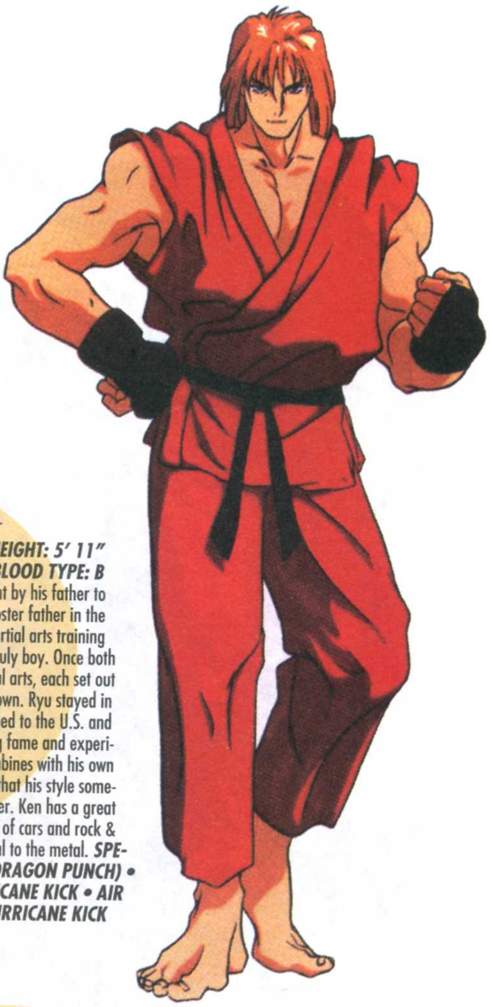
*You can't tell the players without a program, and with* ***STREET FIGHTER****'s many incarnations in both Japanese and English, even knowing their names isn't so easy! Before the kicking and punching even starts, here's a sneak peek at the major players of* ***STREET FIGHTER II: THE ANIMATED MOVIE****, now available in English (in both "Edited" and "Uncut" versions) from Renegade Home Video!*



## ◄ RYU

**BORN: 21 JULY 1964 • HEIGHT: 5' 10" • WEIGHT: 175 LBS. • BLOOD TYPE: O**

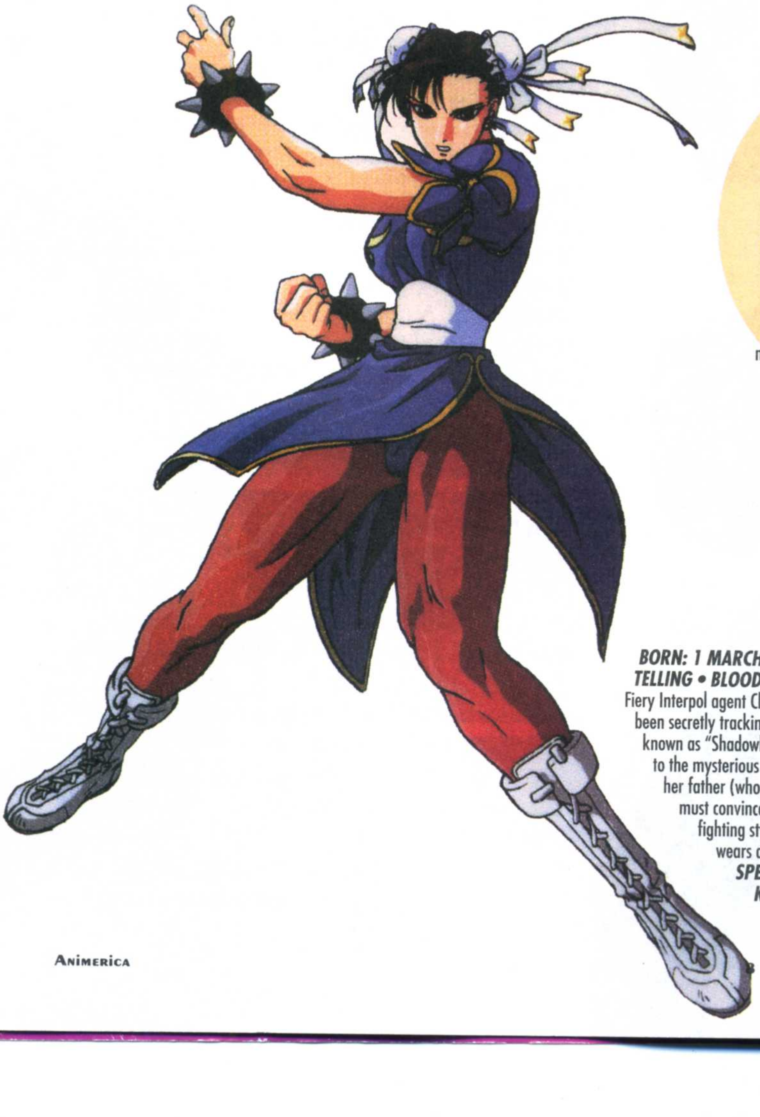
Of Japanese descent, Ryu began studying martial arts at an early age, trained by his foster father, and has devoted his life to it ever since. Although his moves are the same type as his friend and training partner Ken's, their styles differ dramatically, as seen in the Japanese TV series ***STREET FIGHTER II V***, which features the adventures of young Ken and Ryu and their travels around the world to perfect their martial arts. Ryu is always trying to improve his martial arts ability and in the movie, he is currently focusing on mastering his inner discipline. ***SPECIAL MOVES: SHO-RYU-KEN (DRAGON PUNCH) • HADOKEN (FIREBALL) • HURRICANE KICK • AIR HURRICANE KICK***



## KEN ►

**BORN: 14 FEBRUARY 1965 • HEIGHT: 5' 11" • WEIGHT: 180 LBS. • BLOOD TYPE: B**

The brash and cocksure Ken was sent by his father to live and train with Ryu and his foster father in the forests of Japan in the hopes that martial arts training would instill some discipline in the unruly boy. Once both boys had mastered the basics of martial arts, each set out to further their training on their own. Ryu stayed in Japan, while the wealthy Ken returned to the U.S. and pursued a career of fighting, gaining fame and experience. Ken's freewheeling nature combines with his own natural tendency to show off, meaning that his style sometimes contains more flash than thunder. Ken has a great love of the great American traditions of cars and rock & roll, and delights in putting the pedal to the metal. ***SPECIAL MOVES: SHO-RYU-KEN (DRAGON PUNCH) • HADOKEN (FIREBALL) • HURRICANE KICK • AIR HURRICANE KICK***



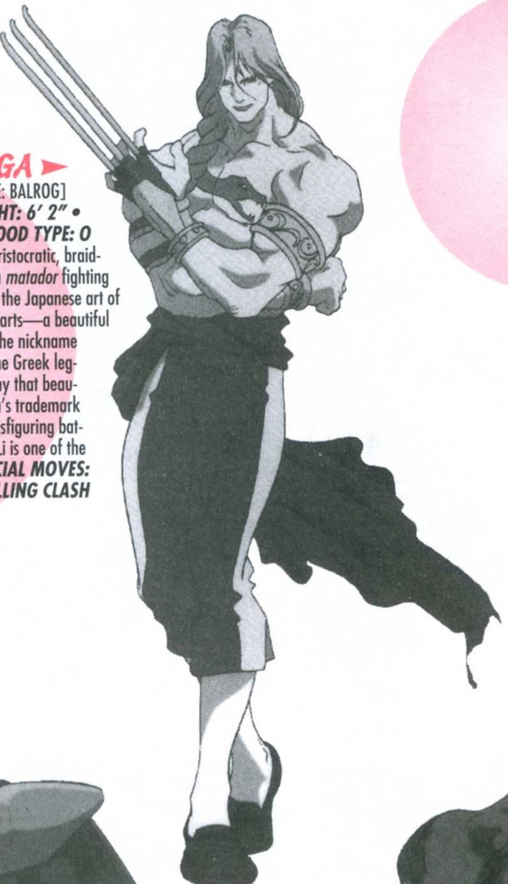
## ◄CHUN-LI

**BORN: 1 MARCH 1968 • HEIGHT: 5' 8" • WEIGHT: NOT TELLING • BLOOD TYPE: A**

Fiery Interpol agent Chun-Li's quest for justice guides her life, and she has been secretly tracking the movements of an international crime syndicate known as "Shadowlaw" for years. Finally the trail has led her and Interpol to the mysterious Bison, who she believes is responsible for the death of her father (who, in ***SF II V***, is a Hong Kong police chief), but first she must convince the brusque Guile to fight by her side. Her powerful fighting style is based on the classic martial arts of China and she wears a variation on the traditional Chinese fighting costume. ***SPECIAL MOVES: LIGHTNING KICK • WHIRLWIND KICK • SPINNING BIRD KICK • FIREBALL • KI-KO-KEN • AIR SPINNING BIRD KICK***

Street Fighter II: The Animated Movie © 1994 Capcom

# THE ANIMATED MOVIE

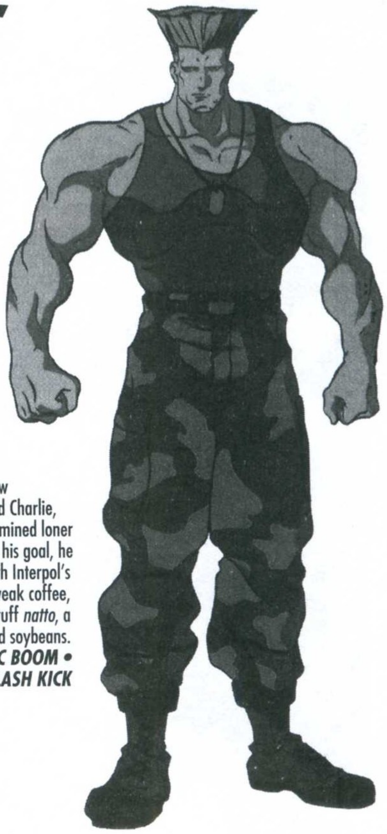


### VEGA ►

[JAPANESE NAME: BALROG]

***BORN: 27 JANUARY 1967 • HEIGHT: 6′ 2″ • HEIGHT : 178 LBS. • BLOOD TYPE: O***

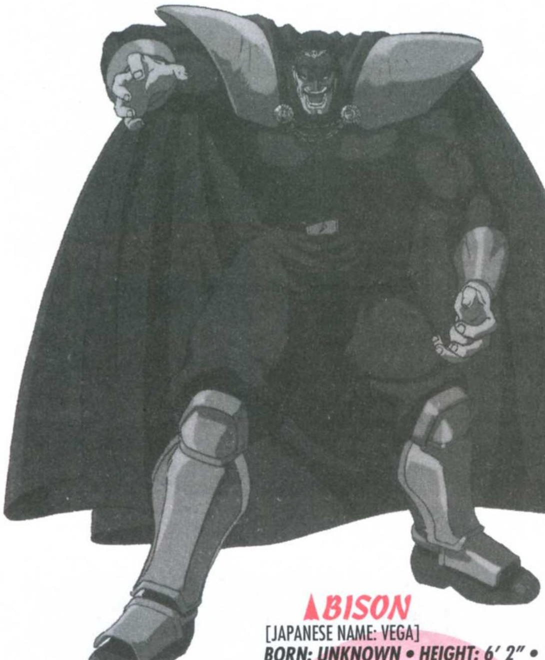
Born of a noble Spanish bloodline, the aristocratic, braid-tressed Vega uses the skills he learned as a *matador* fighting bulls in the Spanish *torradas* together with the Japanese art of Ninjitsu to create his own style of martial arts—a beautiful but deadly ballet which has earned Vega the nickname "Spanish Ninja." Vain and egotistical as the Greek legend of Narcissus, Vega lives by the philosophy that beauty is strength, and despises ugliness. Vega's trademark mask is to protect his beautiful face from disfiguring battle scars. His acrobatic fight with Chin-Li is one of the movie's spectacular highlights. ***SPECIAL MOVES: CLAW DIVE • AIR SUPLEX • ROLLING CLASH***



### GUILE ►

***BORN: 23 DECEMBER 1960 • HEIGHT: 6′ 2″ • WEIGHT: 218 LBS. • BLOOD TYPE: O***

Calm and emotionless on the outside, the camouflage-clad, impressively spike-haired Guile is fueled by a terrible inner rage. An ex-member of an elite Special Forces team, Guile left his wife and daughter to seek revenge against Shadowlaw for the murder of his best friend Charlie, killed during a mission. A determined loner who will stop at nothing to reach his goal, he is at first resistant to working with Interpol's operative Chun-Li. He enjoys weak coffee, and dislikes the Japanese foodstuff *natto*, a "brain food" made from fermented soybeans. ***SPECIAL MOVES: SONIC BOOM • FLASH KICK***

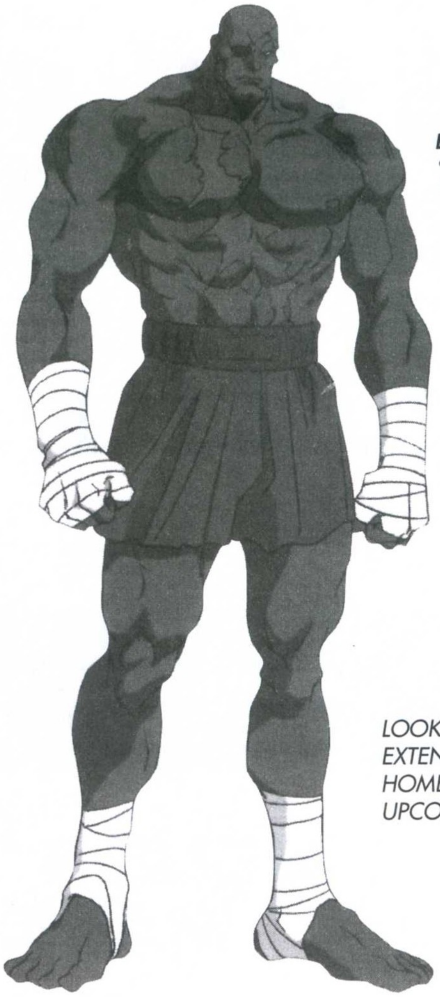


### ▲BISON

[JAPANESE NAME: VEGA]

***BORN: UNKNOWN • HEIGHT: 6′ 2″ • WEIGHT: 256 LBS. • BLOOD TYPE: A***

His origin a closely guarded secret, Bison emerged to lead the international crime syndicate Shadowlaw, impressing the world with the incredible power at his command. Bison rules over his empire with an iron fist, and is not too surprisingly seen as a ruthless dictator and master of evil. Preferring to let his underlings do most of the dirty work, Bison only unleashes his awesome psychic powers when absolutely necessary. His ultimate goal is to rule the world, and the only things standing in his way are the street fighters, and some of his own incompetent underlings. ***SPECIAL MOVES: HEAD STOMP • PSYCHO CRUSHER • SCISSOR KICK • SKULL DIVER***

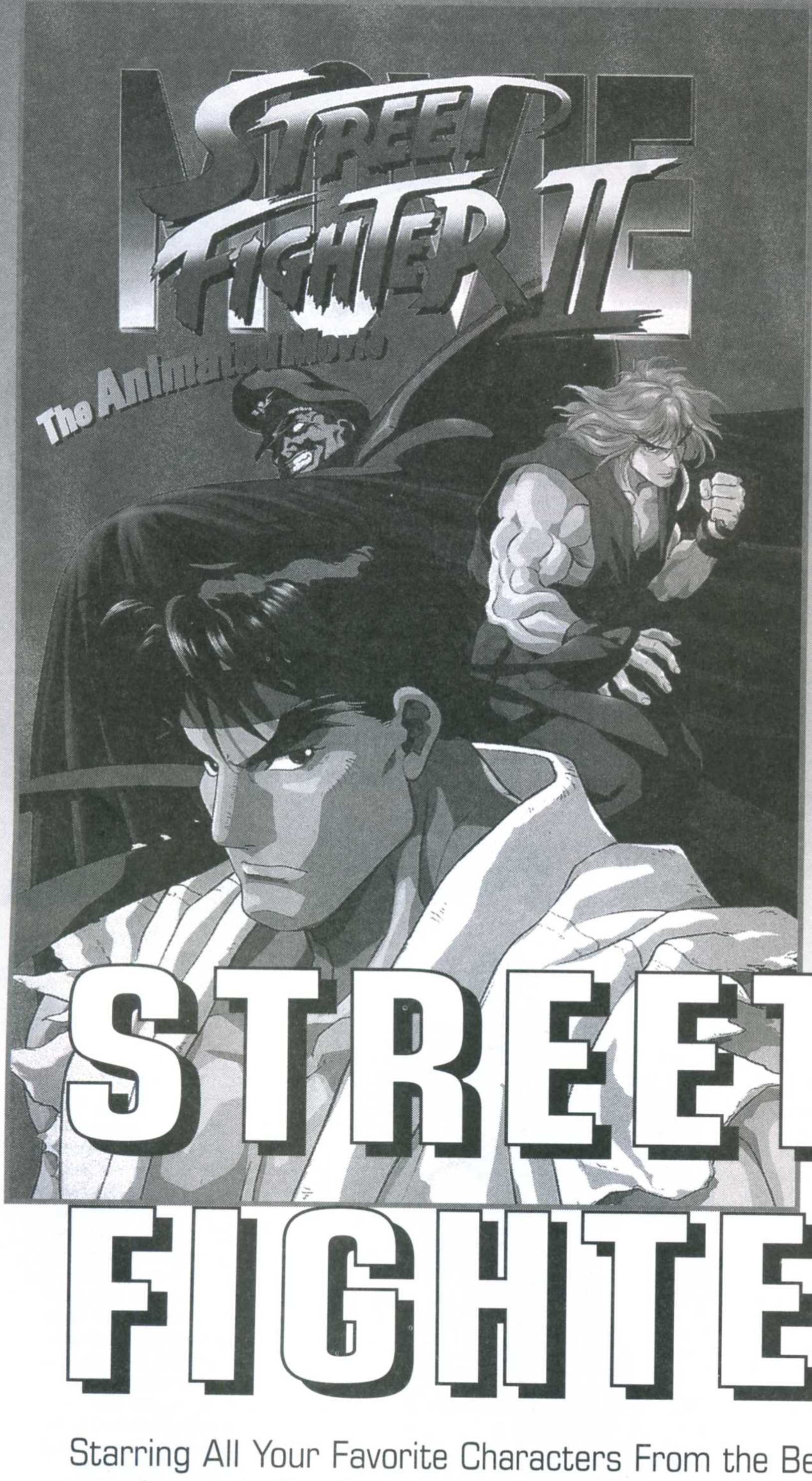


### ◄ SAGAT

***BORN: 2 JULY 1955 • HEIGHT: 7′ 5″ • WEIGHT: 303 LBS. • BLOOD TYPE: B***

Bald, scarred and sporting an eyepatch, the grim-faced Sagat was previously known as the "King of the Street Fighters." In his prime, Sagat crushed every opponent that faced him with his powerful Muay Thai kickboxing style. Once considered the most powerful fighter in the world, the aging Sagat was finally toppled from his throne by the young Ryu. Bitter, angry, and constantly reminded of his defeat by the scar carved across his chest by Ryu's Dragon Punch, Sagat now plots to regain his former title at any cost. At heart an honorable man, Sagat will nonetheless side with anyone who will give him the chance to fight and defeat the hated Ryu. ***SPECIAL MOVES: TIGER SHOT • TIGER UPPERCUT***

*LOOK FOR AN EVEN MORE EXTENSIVE PIECE ON RENEGADE HOME VIDEO'S **SF II™** IN AN UPCOMING ISSUE.* ☆



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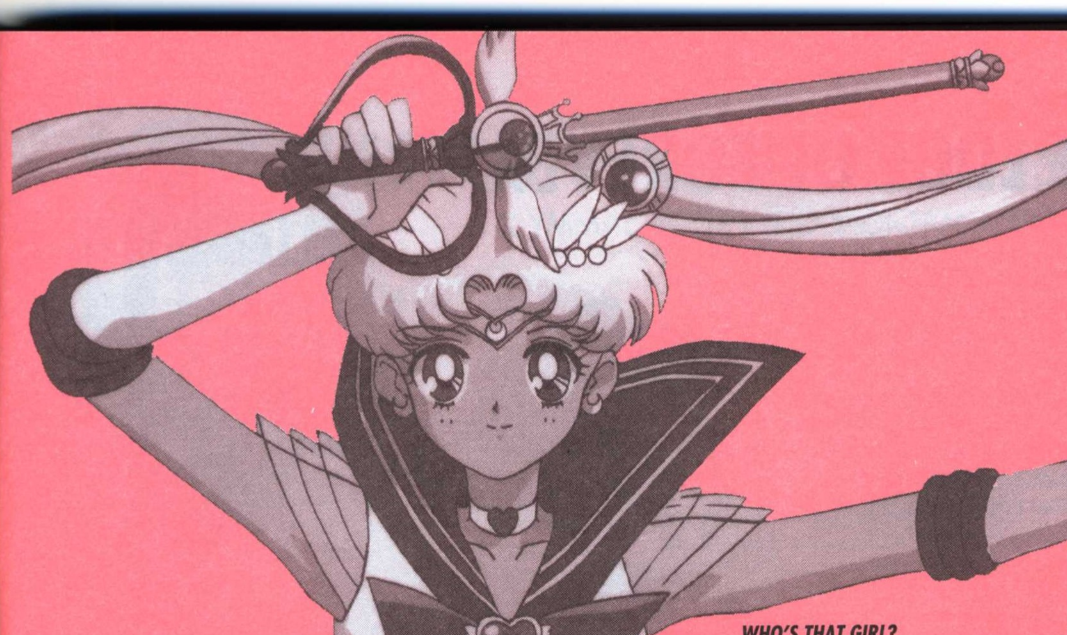


**WHO'S THAT GIRL?**
*Say, isn't that pink-haired moppet "Rini" from* ***SAILOR MOON****...and why is she dressed up like that? The answer's soon to come, as the* ***SAILOR MOON*** *saga continues on U.S. TV! Look to ANIMERICA for more details as they develop.*

**WHEN THE PIPER CALLS...**
*When they blow their flutes, the children must follow in an updated take on the Pied Piper in the* ***SAILOR MOON SUPER S*** *theatrical feature!*

© 1996 Naoko Takeuchi • Kodansha • Toei Animation.

# SAILOR SOLDIERS, SAIL ON

## ● SAILOR MOON SUPER S: THE MOVIE

A theatrical feature produced for the Toei Winter Animation Festival, the approximately hour-long feature "*Sailor Moon Super S: The Nine Sailor Soldiers Unite! The Miracle of the Black Dream Hole*" is a "side-story" to the main ***SAILOR MOON*** tale (meaning, it doesn't really influence the continuity of the TV series). ***SAILOR MOON***'s story on U.S. TV has progressed through most of ***SAILOR MOON***'s second "season," called ***SAILOR MOON R*** in Japan, but in Japan the series is currently in its fourth "season" as ***SAILOR MOON SUPER S***, and has introduced even more new Sailor Soldiers to the cast, as well as additional, even more flamboyant villains!

In the new film, nine Sailor warriors—including characters we have yet to see in the U.S. such as Sailors Uranus and Pluto—appear, to fight an evil character "Badianu" who wants to turn the entire Earth into a dreamless black hole. To accomplish this, the wicked woman begins to kidnap children with the help of her Pied Piper-like henchmen, and the mysterious pink-haired moppet Chibi Usa ("Little Usagi," known as "Rini" in the U.S.) is one of those nabbed! Now Sailor Moon and her friends have to fight against the terrible Badinau to get Chibi Usa back. Also, in flashbacks to their childhood days, the film shows nearly all the main characters as too-cute children! An approximately 30-minute companion feature "Ami's First Love," details—you guessed it—a love story with Ami ("Amy") in a flashback to ***SAILOR MOON***'s first season. Special alert for sharp-eyed viewers—this version of Ami's first love shows Sailor Mercury possessing powers she's not supposed to have until later in the series! ***SAILOR MOON SUPER S: THE NINE SAILOR SOLDIERS UNITE! THE MIRACLE OF THE BLACK DREAM HOLE****: RELEASED THEATRICALLY IN JAPAN 23 DECEMBER; LOOK TO ANIMERICA FOR DETAILS ON HOME VIDEO RELEASE AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.* ☆

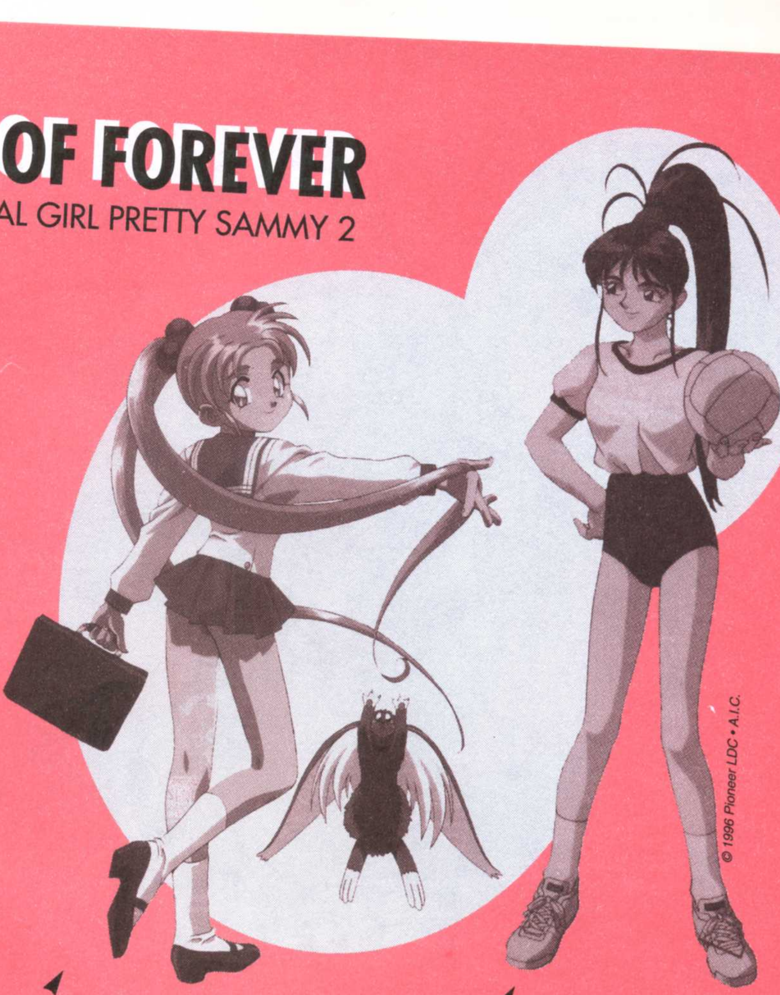
# TENCHI AT THE EDGE OF FOREVER

## ● TENCHI MUYÔ!: THE MOVIE • MAGICAL GIRL PRETTY SAMMY 2

Spring showers bring ***TENCHI MUYÔ!*** flowers! This spring is ***TENCHI!*** time with the ***TENCHI MUYÔ!*** theatrical feature set to release, plus another OAV adventure starring the ponytailed Sasami as Magical Girl Pretty Sammy!

In the ***TENCHI MUYÔ!*** movie, it's business as usual (that is to say, a sort of peaceful chaos) for the freeloaders at the Masaki house. But out in the vastness that is the cosmos, a sort of quirk in the space-time continuum occurs…and suddenly, the Galaxy Police headquarters just up and vanishes! After investigating the problem, it turns out that the whole history of the universe has suddenly changed. But the ***TENCHI!*** gang was unaffected, due to the scientist Washu—who just happened to be in her sub-space lab that day—casting a shield around the Masaki house. But now, to set things right, Tenchi has to go back in time to the source of the anomaly, twenty-six years in the past, to find the cause! Made by the TV show staff, the feature is directed by Hiroshi Negishi with a screenplay by Ryoei Tsukimura (***EL-HAZARD***) and Negishi, and character designs and animation direction by Hiroyuki Horiyuchi.

The second ***MAGICAL GIRL PRETTY SAMMY*** OAV is also scheduled to release in Japan this spring. Titled "Akihabara Chapter: Challenge of the Standard World," the new villain of the story is Biff Standard, and his objective is to standardize the world OS (operating system) to his own form (Windows '95, maybe?). As usual, Lamia is upset that Tsunami has been nominated as the first candidate for the next queen, and Misa and Sammy duke it out in Akihabara. Fight! ***TENCHI MUYÔ! THEATRICAL FEATURE:*** *IN THEATERS IN JAPAN THIS SPRING •* ***MAGICAL GIRL PRETTY SAMMY 2*** *FROM PIONEER LDC: ON SALE THIS SPRING; ¥7700.*☆



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**MAGICAL GIRL, TAKE TWO**
*Sasami returns in her magical girl alter ego this spring. Watch out, evildoers!*

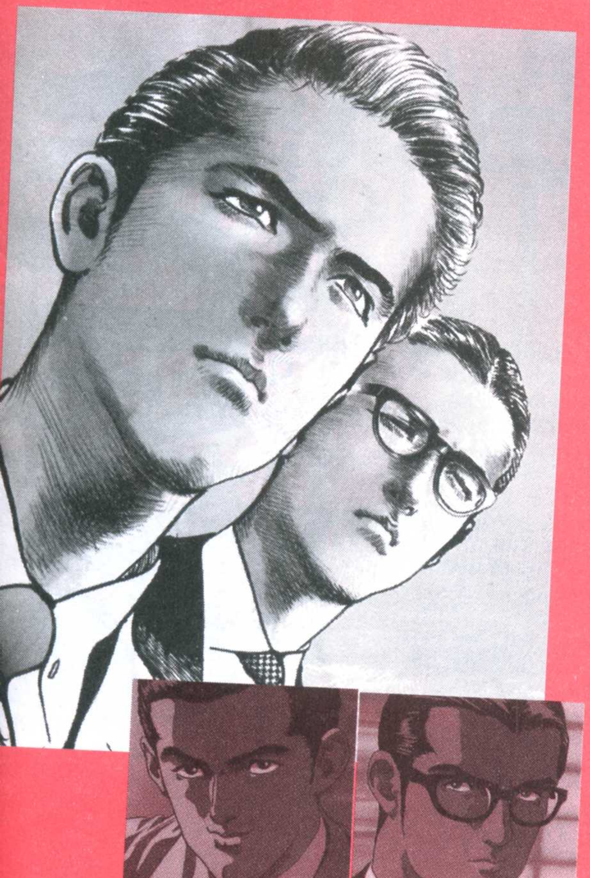
**BACK TO THE FUTURE**
*Achika, the high school girl Tenchi meets on his trip into the past. What's she got to do with all of this?*

# SHE SELLS SANCTUARY

## ● SANCTUARY: THE ANIMATION

The erotically charged story of two handsome young men and their rise to the top of Japan's ruling class by any means possible, Sho Fumimura and Ryoichi Ikegami's manga story ***SANCTUARY*** was recently produced as a live-action feature, and is now set to release as an OAV series from Toho Video. Based on the original manga by Fumimura (***FIST OF THE NORTH STAR***) and Ikegami (***CRYING FREEMAN, MAI THE PSYCHIC GIRL***), published in the U.S. by Viz Comics, ***SANCTUARY*** is the story of two young boys who survived the horrors of the Cambodian "Killing Fields." Now living in Japan, they've carved their own road to independence, and together, they may be powerful enough to topple the leaders of both the Japanese Parliament and the *yakuza* crime syndicate. But on their way to building a "sanctuary" for themselves, will they destroy the country or save it?

An up-to-the-minute political drama filled with all the violence, eroticism and underworld intrigue that made ***CRYING FREEMAN*** such a memorable series, the animated ***SANCTUARY*** releases for rental in Japan this month, with home video sales to come not too long after. Directed by Takashi Watanabe, with screenplay by Kenji Terada and character designs and animation direction by Hidemi Kubo. Sho Hayami ("Max," ***SUPERDIMENSIONAL FORTRESS MACROSS, MACROSS 7***) stars as the voice of the handsome crime boss "Hojo." ***SANCTUARY*** *FROM TOHO VIDEO: 70 MINS.; LOOK TO ANIMERICA FOR DETAILS ON HOME VIDEO RELEASE AS SOON AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.*☆



**NOTICE ANY RESEMBLANCE?**
*Similar to the* ***CRYING FREEMAN*** *animation,* ***SANCTUARY****'s animation direction adheres closely to the manga, and the results are amazingly similar to Ryoichi Ikegami's original art.*

# FASTER PUSSYCAT, KILL, KILL!

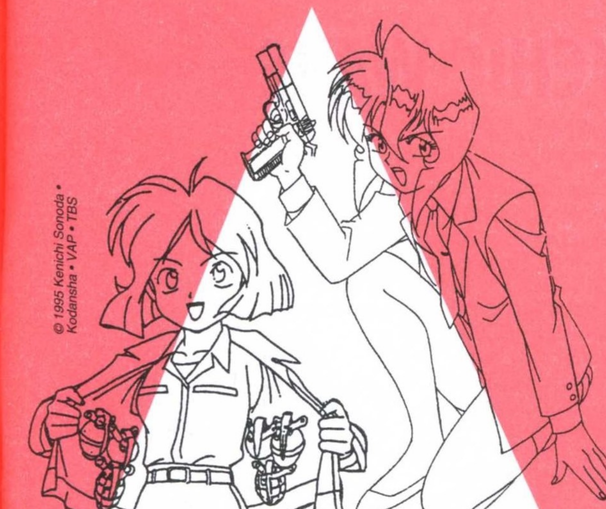
### GUNSMITH CATS

**GUNSMITH CATS** (also the name of main character Rally's custom gunshop) is an action-packed shoot 'em up based on the manga by Kenichi Sonoda (available in English from Dark Horse Comics), character designer of the girls-with-guns anime classics ***BUBBLEGUM CRISIS*** and ***GALL FORCE***, and creator of the similarly Chicago-based guns-a'-blazin' and hot-roddin' car-chase video ***RIDING BEAN*** (in fact, the main character "Rally" from ***GUNSMITH CATS*** is supposed to be a younger version of the loyal sidekick-to-the-hero "Rally" in ***RIDING BEAN***).

Rally Vincent is a professional bounty hunter and gunslinger who's staked out the mean streets of Chicago as her turf, packing a mean set of her own custom-made, hand-built shootin' irons and high velocity cartridges. With her young partner, teenage-old explosives expert and adorable moppet Minnie-May, she's ready to cleanse the Windy City of scum and villainy with a few well-aimed blasts from her trusty pump-action sidearm.

Texas-based A.D. Vision is releasing ***GUNSMITH CATS*** in a variety of formats: English VHS, subtitled VHS, bilingual laserdisc, and a special edition featuring a bonus 40-minute documentary, ***THE MAKING OF GUNSMITH CATS***. But you don't have to jump the next train to Chicago to see it! ***GUNSMITH CATS*** *FROM A.D. VISION: ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/BILINGUAL LD/SPECIAL EDITION; 50 MINS.(70 MINS. FOR SPECIAL EDITION); US$19.95/ $24.95/ $39.95/ $34.95.*☆

**A HOT TIME IN THE OL' TOWN TONIGHT**
*Character designer/manga artist Kenichi Sonoda returns to his favorite stomping ground, Chicago, with two guns-and-grenades-packin' gals ready to raise some heck in* ***GUNSMITH CATS!*** ▼

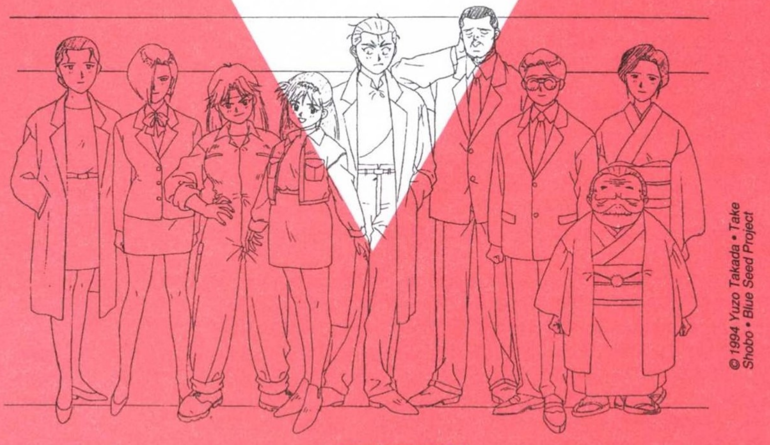

© 1995 Kenichi Sonoda • Kodansha • VAP • TBS

# GRASSROOTS GRUESOME

### BLUE SEED

Young Japanese schoolgirl Momiji has a heavy destiny—she is the latest descendant of a family fated to hold Japan's future in their grasp. The Aragami, ancient folkloric monsters of mystical origin, are on the verge of re-invading the human world—but the sacrifice of a human of Momiji's bloodline has the power to bring their plans to a screeching halt. As inheritrix of this vitally important fate, Momiji *should* have little to fear from the Aragami (since it would be very *bad* for them should she die) but an accident leaves her mortally wounded, and the mythical monsters are forced to gift Momiji with superhuman powers to save her life…and their own, as well!

***3x3 EYES***, another Takada creation, is the tale of the zombie manservant of a legendary three-eyed monster who is questing to become human. ***3x3 EYES*** has been praised by none other than the hard rockin' band **White Zombie**'s heavy metal leader, Rob Zombie. Like ***3x3 EYES***, ***BLUE SEED*** is based, at least in part, on Japan's own ancient mythical monster-slaying legends, but gives them a modern-day twist in its fetching young heroine, who, thanks to her new powers, eventually becomes part of an ***X-FILES***-like secret government agency whose mission is to combat the Aragami invasion! Look for ***BLUE SEED*** to be released from the Texas-based A.D. Vision in both subtitled and English formats this month. ***BLUE SEED*** *FROM A.D. VISON: ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS; 60 MINS.; US$24.95/$29.95.*☆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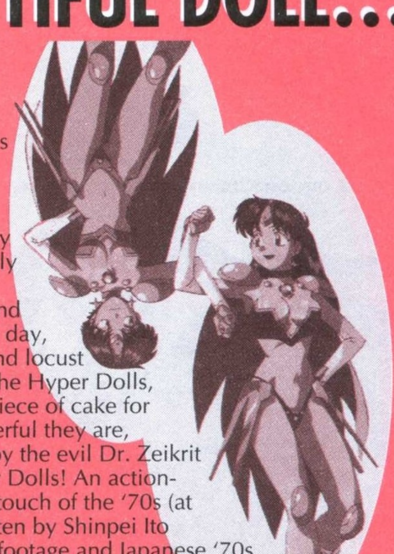
▲ **MONSTER MASH**
*Momiji and her fellow ghostbusters in the cast of* ***BLUE SEED.***

# OH, YOU BEAUTIFUL DOLL…

### HYPER DOLLS

Mew and Mica are a couple of pretty cute high school students…but that's not the whole story (as if it ever is!). No, Mew and Mica have a secret—they're really aliens! These buxom beauties are androids from outer space, and they've really come to the Earth to preserve peace, and only one person on Earth—a classmate named Akai—knows their *real* identity. But what kind of evil do they fight? The answer arrives one day, when Tokyo falls under attack by jellyfish and locust monsters, and nobody but Mew and Mica, the Hyper Dolls, can save the city! Super jellyfish may be a piece of cake for the super-androids, but no matter how powerful they are, there's always more monsters to fight, sent by the evil Dr. Zeikrit who will stop at nothing to defeat the Hyper Dolls! An action-packed slapstick sci-fi comedy, with a little touch of the '70s (at least, Japan's '70s), ***HYPER DOLLS*** was written by Shinpei Ito (***MOLDIVER***), and also contains live-action footage and Japanese '70s hit tunes sung by the voice-actors! Look for the Hyper Dolls to protect your town this March. ***HYPER DOLLS VOL. 1*** *FROM PIONEER LDCA: ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS/BILINGUAL LD; 40 MINS.; US$24.98/$29.98/$39.98.*☆


© 1996 Pioneer LDC

# RUN THROUGH THE JUNGLE

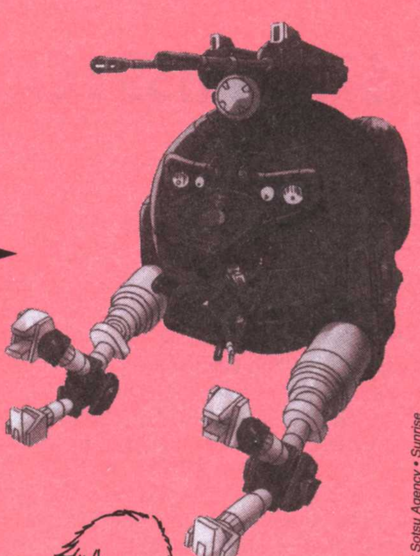
## MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM TEAM 08

The long-awaited new ***GUNDAM*** OAV series, ***MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM TEAM 08***, (also known as "the 8th MS Platoon" in previous stories) is finally on sale, and according to those who saw a sneak preview at a recent Japanese fan convention, the first episode has at least *one* scene that no ***GUNDAM*** fan has seen before! Set during the "One-Year War" (the setting of the original ***MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM*** TV series and compilation movies, featuring the battle between the Earth Federation and the Zeon Empire over Earth's colonies' independence), the story follows a young Federation Ensign named Shiro Amada, on his way to a new assignment on Earth from Side 2, one of Earth's orbiting colony clusters. His transport ship picks up a distress signal from a lone GM (the Earth Federation's standard mobile suit, of which the Gundam is a more advanced model), under attack by a Zeon mobile suit. Against everyone's advice, Shiro takes the transport ship's only available mobile weapon, the aptly named "Ball" unit, and heads out to save the GM. The following scene, where the Ball fights and wins over the Zeon's Zaku mobile suit, is unprecedented in ***GUNDAM*** history.

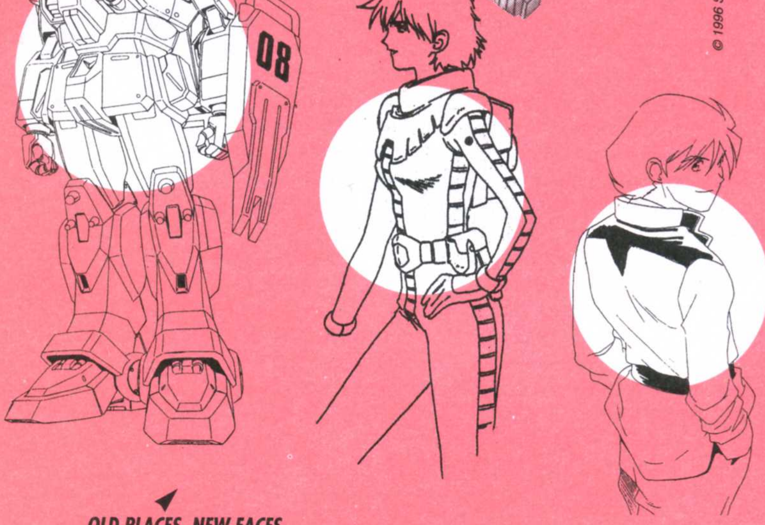
His Ball destroyed as well, both he and the Zaku pilot eject into space and find their way into an abandoned ship where they must cooperate to survive on their scant oxygen supply until they can be rescued. By then, of course, he and the Zeon pilot, Aina Sakhalin (named after an island on the western end of Siberia) share a deeper bond....

"I've always thought that heroes in robot stories, especially super robot stories, seemed so contrived," comments director Takeyuki Konda (***VI-FAM***). "In this video, all the soldiers are ordinary people and the Gundam is just an ordinary weapon. This was also the premise of the original ***GUNDAM***, and I think, thankfully, that this is the kind of ***GUNDAM*** everyone's been waiting for."

With thirteen episodes planned, the first volume of ***MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM TEAM 08*** includes the first two episodes. Character designs are by Toshihiro Kawamoto (***GUNDAM 0080,ORGUSS 02***), with mecha designs by Kunio Okawara (***GUNDAM, VOTOMS***), Hajime Katoki (***GUNDAM 0083, V-GUNDAM, G-GUNDAM***), Kimitoshi Yamane and Maehiro Maeda (***NADIA***). ***MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM TEAM 08 VOL. 1***: *ON SALE 25 JANUARY FROM BANDAI VISUAL; 60 MINS.; ¥4800.*✰



***LET'S PLAY BALL***
*In the latest "side story" of the original* ***MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM****'s "One-Year War" timeline, you get to see this Federation machine, the RB-79 "Ball," beat up on an axe-wielding Zaku mobile suit. Now THAT'S something we* ***GUNDAM*** *fans don't see everyday!*



***OLD PLACES, NEW FACES***
*Left to right, Kunio Okawara's Gundam du jour, Zeon pilot Aina Sakhalin, plus main character Shiro Amada.*

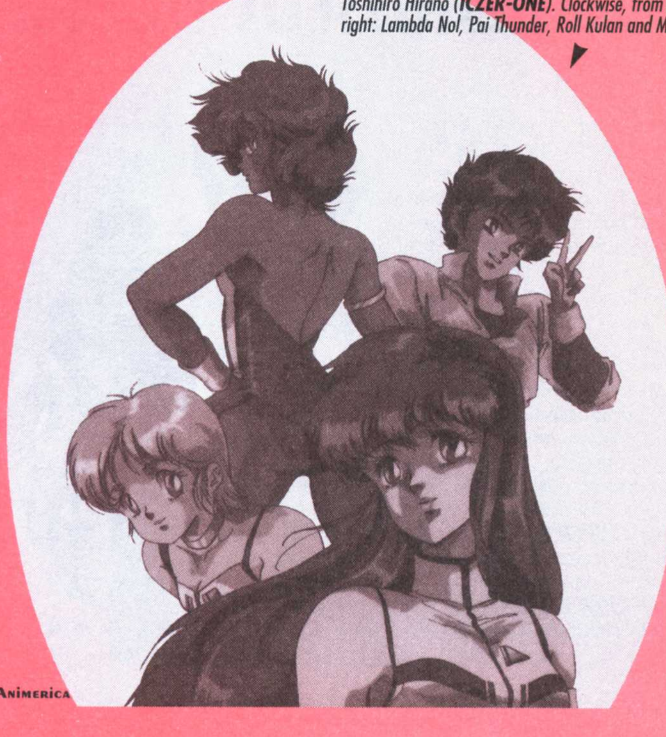
© 1996 Sotsu Agency • Sunrise

# PSYCHIC WAVE

## DANGAIOH

Dangaioh, the most powerful weapon in the universe, is a mighty robot powered by a force of four individuals with great psychic powers, collectively created by the intelligent and mysterious Doctor Tarsan. But the young psychics unfortunately have no memories of their former lives, and are at first loath to take on the responsibilities of their new ones…until they realize that the Dangaioh alone can stop the bloody rampage of the evil Captain Garimoth. Is their psychogenic wave strong enough to destroy his evil henchman, the notorious cyborg Gil Berg? Or will the warriors be led astray by Garimoth's subliminal tricks, which seek out, and use, the weaknesses in their forgotten pasts?

One of the first-ever OAVs to be released in English-subtitled format, Manga Entertainment is offering a new English-language version of this familiar U.S. Renditions subtitled classic, featuring sci-fi adventure, mecha, androids and psychic power. Character designs and direction are by Toshihiro Hirano (***ICZER-ONE***) with mecha designs by Shoji Kawamori (***MACROSS PLUS***), Koichi Ohata (***GENOCYBER***) and Masami Obari (***DETONATOR ORGUN, BUBBLEGUM CRISIS***). ***DANGAIOH*** *FROM MANGA ENTERTAINMENT: ON SALE 19 MARCH; ENGLISH VHS; 90 MINS.; US$19.95.*✰



***GALS (AND ONE GUY) IN TIGHTS***
*The psychic warriors of* ***DANGAIOH****, as designed by Toshihiro Hirano (****ICZER-ONE****). Clockwise, from left to right: Lambda Nol, Pai Thunder, Roll Kulan and Mia Alice.*

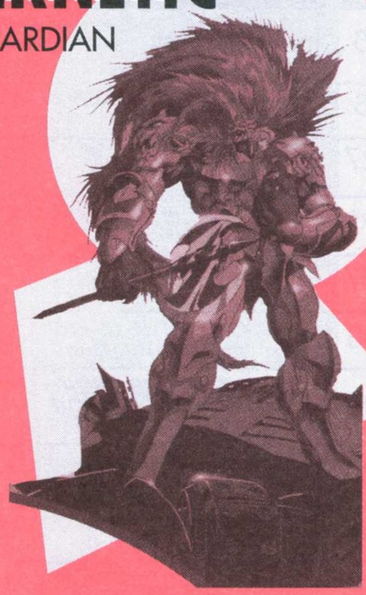
© 1989 Emotion • A.I.C. • Artmic

# GENO-CYBERNETIC

## CYBERNETICS GUARDIAN

Cyberwood—the City of Tomorrow. A majestic forest of steel and concrete, a monument to human progress…but inside, it's being eaten away from within by the parasitic slum its residents call "Cancer." Researchers Leyla and Adler, contracted to find a method of cleaning up Cancer, are locked in competition to find an effective solution. Leyla favors a non-violent method based upon her powered Guard Suit, but Adler pushes for his Genocyber Killing Machine (shades of ***ROBOCOP***). Then, when Leyla's assistant John Stalker is sent to test the new Guard Suit, the devious Adler sees the perfect opportunity to win the bid. But neither scientist could have predicted the dark secret lurking within John Stalker…and all are ultimately drawn into the bowels of Cancer, where John will meet a nightmarish destiny. What hideous fate awaits? And what's John's connection with the satanic followers of the Doldo Brethren, who lurk and plot in the rumbling bowels of the city?

Directed by monster master Koichi Ohata, creator of the terrifying future soldier ***M.D.*** ("Most Dangerous") ***GEIST*** and director of ***GENOCYBER***, ***CYBERNETICS GUARDIAN*** is another apocalyptic future from the man with a taste for the bleak. Look for a special ANIMERICA Creator Close-Up with Koichi Ohata next month! ***CYBERNETICS GUARDIAN*** *FROM U.S. MANGA CORPS: SUBTITLED VHS; 45 MINS.; US$29.95.*☆



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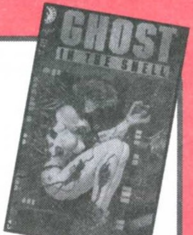
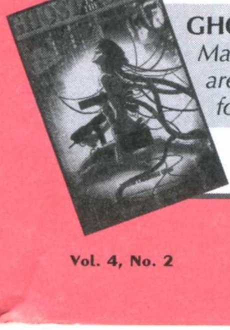
***URBAN RENEWAL***
*Check out* ***CYBERNETICS GUARDIAN*** *for Koichi Ohata's take on the solution to violent crime in the inner city from U.S. Manga Corps.*

## THIS MONTH'S COVER STORY

### GHOST IN THE SHELL



Manga Entertainment is showcasing ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** as a theatrical release across America, with a home video release planned to follow this summer. In the meantime, check out Masamune Shirow's original manga, originally an eight-issue miniseries from Dark Horse Comics, now available as a trade paperback compilation volume. Also keep an eye out at your favorite importer for Kodansha's ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** film comic (pictured below). ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** *FROM DARK HORSE COMICS: 352 PAGES;*



© 1995 Masamune Shirow • Seishinsha

### GHOST IN THE SHELL THEATRICAL RELEASE DATES

*Manga cautions that some bookings are tenative; dates and locations are also subject to change. Be sure to check with your local theaters for updated information.*

| | |
|---|---|
| 2-8 February | Tower Theater • Salt Lake City, UT |
| 18-22 February | Tampa Theater • Tampa, FL |
| 19-22 February | Williamsburg Theater • Williamsburg, VA |
| 23-29 February | Images Cinema • Williamstown, MA |
| 1 March | Kendall Square Cinema • Cambridge, MA |
| 8-14 March | Carolina Cinema • Chapel Hill, NC |
| 8-14 March | Colony Theater • Raleigh, NC |
| 8-14 March | Avon Cinema • Providence, RI |
| 8-14 March | Town Hall • Wilton, NH |
| 22-28 March | Dobie Theater • Austin, TX |
| 22 March-4 April | Key Theater • Washington, DC |
| 29 March-4 April | Charles Theater • Baltimore, MD |

## THE ANIMERICA TOP TEN

### AMERICA'S BESTSELLING ANIME

*Based on Pre-Orders Compiled by Capital City Distribution, Inc. (During the Month of January 1996)*

1……***RANMA 1/2 ANYTHING-GOES MARTIAL ARTS • TOUGH COOKIES***
Viz Video • $24.95

2……***STREET FIGHTER II: THE ANIMATED MOVIE***
[UNEDITED]
Renegade Home Video • $14.98

3……***RANMA 1/2 COLLECTOR'S EDITION: THE OAVs • VOL. 2***
Viz Video • $34.95

4……***LA BLUE GIRL 3***
Anime 18 • $29.95

5……***DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO: SPECIAL EDITION***
A.D. Vision • $19.95

6……***F3 • PART 2***
SoftCel Pictures • $29.95

7……***NEW CUTEY HONEY • VOL. 4***
A.D. Vision • $29.95

8……***NEW ANGEL 3***
[UNCUT]
SoftCel Pictures • $29.95

9……***MAGICAL TWILIGHT 3***
[UNCUT]
SoftCel Pictures • $29.95

10….***ANGEL COP • VOL. 6***
Manga Entertainment • $9.95

## THE ANIMERICA TOP TEN

### JAPAN'S BESTSELLING LDs

*The Bestselling Animated Videos, Compiled by Original Confidence Research Company (As of 11/6/95)*

1……***SLAYERS • VOL. 1***
スレイヤーズ
Bandai Visual • ¥5974

2……***MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH, CHAPTER 2 • VOL. 1***
魔法騎士レイアース　第二章
Polydor • ¥4800

3……***BLUE SEED • VOL. 10***
BLUE SEED
King Record • ¥5800

4……***TENCHI MUYÔ! TV • VOL. 4***
*NO NEED FOR TENCHI!*
天地無用！　ＴＶ版
Pioneer LDC • ¥5974

5……***MACROSS 7 • VOL. 8***
マクロス７
Bandai Visual • ¥6000

6……***BLUE SEED • VOL. 11***
BLUE SEED
King Record • ¥5800

7……***EL-HAZARD, THE MAGNIFICENT WORLD • VOL. 5***
神秘の世界エルハザード　第五夜
Pioneer LDC • ¥5974

8……***LOVELY SOLDIER SAILOR MOON S • VOL. 7***
美少女戦士セーラームーンS
Toei Video • ¥5200

9……***SHADOW SKILL • VOL. 1***
影技－SHADOW SKILL
King Record • ¥7800

10….***GOLDEN BOY, THE WANDERING SCHOLAR • VOL. 1***
GOLDEN BOY
さすらいのお勉強野郎
King Record • ¥7800

# ANIMERICA RADAR

**Anime Info for the Otaku Generation.™**

*All info is as accurate and timely as possible; however, last-minute changes do occur. Some titles are available earlier when ordered directly from their U.S. manufacturer.*

## IMPORT LD BOX SETS

| | |
|---|---|
| 1/19 | ***GINGA HYÔRYÛ VIFAM • LD BOX VOL. 1***<br>*ROUND VERNIAN VIFAM*<br>銀河漂流バイファム<br>Taki Corporation • ¥36000 |
| 1/21 | ***WAGA SEISHUN NO ARCADIA: MUGEN KIDô SSX***<br>*("My Youth in Arcadia: Endless Orbit SSX")*<br>わが青春のアルカディア・無限軌道SSX<br>Toei Video • ¥15450 |
| 3/1 | ***LUPIN III TV SPECIAL PERFECTION BOX***<br>ルパンⅢ世TVスペシャルBOX<br>VAP Video • ¥30780 |
| 4/1 | ***AOKI RYÛSEI SPT LAYZNER***<br>*("Blue Comet SPT Layzner")*<br>蒼き流星SPTレイズナー<br>VAP Video • ¥24720 |
| 3/25 | ***FUSHIGI YÛGI • LD BOX 1***<br>*("Wondrous Dance")*<br>ふしぎ遊戯<br>Bandai Visual • ¥36,050 (LD) |

*Please note that our translations are indicated with parentheses and quotes, while English titles provided by the Japanese production companies are set in all caps.*

## IMPORT VHS/LD

| | |
|---|---|
| 2/1 | ***DIRTY PAIR FLASH 3 • VOL. 2, "THE PINK SNIPER"***<br>ダーティペアFLASH3・ピンクの狙撃手<br>VAP • ¥4944 (VHS/LD) |
| 2/3 | ***AKAZUKIN CHA CHA • VOL. 2***<br>*("Li'l Red Riding Hood Cha Cha")*<br>赤ずきんチャチャ<br>King Record • ¥5800 (VHS/LS) |
| 2/7 | ***YÛ YÛ HAKUSHO • EIZÔ HAKUSHO II, " KUWABARA NO SHO"*** *("The Poltergeist Report • Visual Report II, 'Chapter of Kuwabara'")*<br>幽☆遊☆白書・映像白書Ⅱ「桑原の章」<br>Pony Canyon • ¥2500 (VHS) / ¥10000 (LD) |
| 2/7 | ***KEY THE METAL IDOL • VOL. 8, "TO GO"***<br>KEY THE METAL IDOL<br>Pony Canyon • ¥2500/¥5000 (VHS/LD) |
| 2/11 | ***TOKUMU SENTAI SHINESMAN • VOL. 1***<br>*("Special Mission Shinesman")*<br>特務戦隊シャインズマン<br>Gakken/Movic/Sony Music Entertainment • ¥5800(VHS/LD) |
| 2/21 | ***MAHÔJIN GURU GURU • VOL. 2***<br>*("Magic Circle Guru Guru")*<br>魔法陣グルグル<br>Sony Music Entertainment • ¥4800 (VHS/LD) |
| 2/25 | ***HIKYÔ TANKEN FAM & ELY • VOL. 4, "SORA YA, DAICHI YA, MORI YA…"***<br>*("Ruins Explorers Fam & Ely • "The Sky, the Earth, the Forest")*<br>秘境探検ファム&イーリー・空や大地や森や<br>Bandai Visual • ¥5150 (VHS/LD) |
| 2/25 | ***MACROSS PLUS INTERNATIONAL VERSION • VOL. 4***<br>マクロスプラス<br>Bandai Visual • ¥5974 (VHS/LD) |
| 2/25 | ***HA-Ô DAIKEI RYÛ KNIGHT 16 "ADEU LEGEND II," • VOL. 3***<br>*LORD OF LORDS RYÛ KNIGHT*<br>覇王大系リューナイト・アデューレジェンドⅡ<br>Bandai Visual • ¥8034 (VHS/LD) |
| 2/25 | ***KIDÔ SENSHI GUNDAM • DAI 08 MS SHÔTAI • VOL. 2***<br>*MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM TEAM 08*<br>機動戦士ガンダム・第08MS小隊<br>Bandai Visual • ¥4800 (VHS/LD) |
| 2/25 | ***SLAYERS GEKIJÔBAN • KANZEN-MUKETSUBAN***<br>*("Slayers Theatrical Version Impeccably Perfect Edition")*<br>スレイヤーズ劇場版・完全無欠版<br>Bandai Visual • ¥7800 (VHS/LD) |
| 2/25 | ***SHIN KIDÔ SENKI GUNDAM W • VOL. 3***<br>*("New Mobile War Chronicle Gundam Wing")*<br>新機動戦記ガンダムW<br>Bandai Visual • ¥9515 (LD only) |
| 2/25 | ***SHIN KIDÔ SENKI GUNDAM W • VOLS. 5 & 6***<br>*("New Mobile War Chronicle Gundam Wing")*<br>新機動戦記ガンダムW<br>Bandai Visual • ¥6000 (VHS only) |

## ANIME ON SALE THIS MONTH IN JAPAN and AMERICA

## ENGLISH VHS

| | |
|---|---|
| 2/6 | ***RANMA 1/2: ONE GREW OVER THE KUNO'S NEST***<br>Viz Video • US$29.95 |
| 2/6 | ***OGRE SLAYER 2: GRIM FAIRY TALES***<br>Viz Video • US$24.95 |
| 2/27 | ***ANGEL COP • VOL. 6***<br>Manga Entertainment • US$9.95 |
| Delayed | ***ARMITAGE III • VOL. 4: A BIT OF LOVE***<br>Pioneer LDCA • US$19.98 |
| 2/27 | ***THE GUYVER • VOL. 1***<br>Manga Entertainment • US$12.95 |
| 2/96 | ***ALAKAZAM THE GREAT***<br>Orion Home Video • US$14.98 |
| 2/96 | ***ALAKAZAM THE GREAT: LETTERBOXED COLLECTOR'S EDITION***<br>Orion Home Video • US$24.98 |
| 2/96 | ***BLUE SEED • VOL. 1***<br>A.D. Vision • US$19.98 |
| 2/96 | ***GENESIS SURVIVOR GAIARTH***<br>AnimEigo • US$19.95 |
| 2/96 | ***GUNSMITH CATS • VOL. 1***<br>A.D. Vision • US$24.95 |

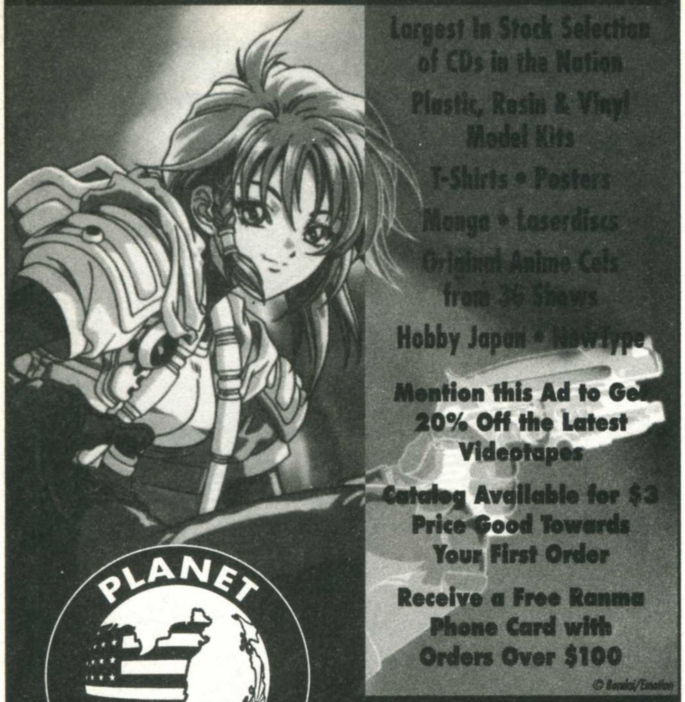
## DOMESTIC LASER DISC

| | |
|---|---|
| 2/14 | ***SPIRIT OF WONDER***<br>*("HYBRID")*<br>AnimEigo • US$39.95 |
| 2/19 | ***GALL FORCE: NEW ERA 1***<br>*(SUBTITLED)*<br>U.S. Manga Corps • US$34.99 |
| 2/20 | ***DETONATOR ORGUN • PART 3***<br>*(SUBTITLED)*<br>U.S. Manga Corps • US$34.99 |
| 2/20 | ***GALL FORCE: EARTH CHAPTER 2***<br>*(SUBTITLED)*<br>U.S. Manga Corps • US$34.99 |
| Delayed | ***ARMITAGE III • VOL. 4: A BIT OF LOVE***<br>*(BILINGUAL/CLOSED-CAPTIONED)*<br>Pioneer LDCA • US$34.98 |
| 2/96 | ***BATTLE ANGEL ALITA***<br>*(SUBTITLED)*<br>A.D. Vision • US$39.98 |
| 2/96 | ***GENESIS SURVIVOR GAIARTH***<br>*("HYBRID")*<br>AnimEigo • US$39.95 |
| 2/96 | ***GUNSMITH CATS***<br>*(BILINGUAL)*<br>A.D. Vision • US$39.95 |

## SUBTITLED VHS

| | |
|---|---|
| 2/6 | ***CYBERNETICS GUARDIAN***<br>U.S. Manga Corps • US$29.95 |
| 2/6 | ***DEMON BEAST INVASION • VOL. 3***<br>Anime 18 • US$29.95 |
| 2/6 | ***METAL FIGHTERS MIKU • VOL. 4***<br>Software Sculptors • US$24.95 |
| 2/6 | ***SOHRYUDEN • VOL. 3***<br>U.S. Manga Corps • US$29.95 |
| Delayed | ***ARMITAGE III • VOL. 4: A BIT OF LOVE***<br>Pioneer LDCA • US$24.98 |
| 2/96 | ***BLUE SEED • VOL. 1***<br>A.D. Vision • US$29.95 |
| 2/96 | ***GUNSMITH CATS • VOL. 1***<br>A.D. Vision • US$24.95 |
| 2/96 | ***GUNSMITH CATS • VOL. 1: SPECIAL EDITION***<br>A.D. Vision • US$34.95 |
| 2/96 | ***LUNA VARGA • VOL. 1***<br>A.D. Vision • US$29.95 |

The Largest Anime Store in Texas



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

**ANIMERICA**: First let me ask about some of my immediate impressions of your film ***GHOST IN THE SHELL***. One thing that particularly caught my eye was the scene in the climactic museum shoot-out where the machine-gun fire rakes up the medieval "Tree of Life" painting (stopping just before *hominis*, "mankind").

**Oshii**: The museum was based on the Crystal Palace. [*A huge glass hall built for the Victorian Great Exhibition of 1850 in London, blown up during the Second World War to prevent it from being used as a landmark for German bombers—Ed.*] The "Tree" was not from the Palace, but from another European museum which I unfortunately can't recall.

**ANIMERICA**: I notice such things because they seem to be part of your distinctive art direction—for example, the fish-eye shots used in the ***PATLABOR*** movies. Do they represent a sense of unreality?

**Oshii**: That is part of it, but I also wished to describe the world from another viewpoint.

**ANIMERICA**: I had a question about the way the characters appear in ***GHOST IN THE SHELL***. It seems to me that they appear more "Western" than is usual in anime. Was this done intentionally?

**Oshii**: It wasn't intentional. What I wanted to do was to have characters who looked more like realistic human beings, as opposed to your regular anime characters. So, perhaps as a result, they came to appear more "Western."

**ANIMERICA**: How did you first become involved with the film project for ***GHOST IN THE SHELL***?

**Oshii**: About six months after I finished ***PATLABOR 2***, I got a call from Bandai Visual, and that's when they offered me the director's position.

**ANIMERICA**: Were you previously familiar with Masamune Shirow's manga of ***GHOST***?

**Oshii**: Yes, and I liked it.

**ANIMERICA**: What sort of involvement did Shirow have with the film?

**Oshii**: He had none—it was my project alone.

**ANIMERICA**: What was it that interested you in directing the film?

**Oshii**: Well, first of all, I really liked the original story of the comic—but most of all, when I was directing the ***PATLABOR*** films, they possessed a common theme, and I wanted to do more stories of the kind—and when the subject matter of ***GHOST*** came up, it was perfect.

**ANIMERICA**: So ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** was continuing a theme that was in the ***PATLABOR*** movies? How would you describe this theme?

**Oshii**: How humanity will change as it deals with new technology.

**ANIMERICA**: That is perhaps the most basic question of science fiction, isn't it?

**Oshii**: Well, I'm not so sure.

**ANIMERICA**: Masamune Shirow is known, even in America, as one of the most distinctive of manga artists. But you are also known as one of the most distinctive of anime directors. How does Shirow's vision turn into *your* vision?

**Oshii**: When I decided to direct the film, I went to see Shirow—and Shirow is very famous for not going out to meet his public [*Just as "Motoko Kusanagi" is a pseudonym for the main character of* ***GHOST***, *"Masamune Shirow" is the enigmatic manga artist's pen name—Ed.*]. I asked him, Please, let me direct the film in my own style, with my own ideas—and he agreed, so I was able to proceed. I had the freedom to put ***GHOST*** into my world, without having to further ask for his approval.

**ANIMERICA**: So Shirow said it was okay for you to take your own approach?

**Oshii**: Yeah. "Do as you want," as he put it.

**ANIMERICA**: Once you had the okay to take your own approach to filming the manga, what process of adaptation did you follow?

**Oshii**: First I considered the film's setting, its world.

**ANIMERICA**: Why should that come first?

**Oshii**: For me, the actual town, or city environment of the story is the most important thing—I must set that up before the rest can proceed.

**ANIMERICA**: Back in 1985 when the OAV genre was new, you made ***ANGEL'S EGG***....

**Oshii**: A decade ago! It had the elements that intrigued me as a film....

**ANIMERICA**: And they are...?

**Oshii**: Ruins—I like ruins, museums, fish, birds, water...and girls. [LAUGHS]

**ANIMERICA**: Many of your films have quotes from the Bible, and discussions of philosophies from the Bible. Why is that?

**Oshii**: I really liked the Bible when I was a little boy. And when I was a student, at one point I was planning to enter a seminary, but I didn't. Even now, though, I read the Bible sometimes.

**ANIMERICA**: Are you a Christian, or do you just like the Bible for its philosophy?

**Oshii**: For its philosophy.

**ANIMERICA**: What was your very first anime movie directing project?

**Oshii**: It was ***URUSEI YATSURA: ONLY YOU***.

**ANIMERICA**: The first ***URUSEI YATSURA*** movie, yet you also directed the second (***BEAUTIFUL DREAMER***), which I think is the one that really made American anime fans begin to notice your distinctive style. Are you interested in dreams?

**Oshii**: Yes.

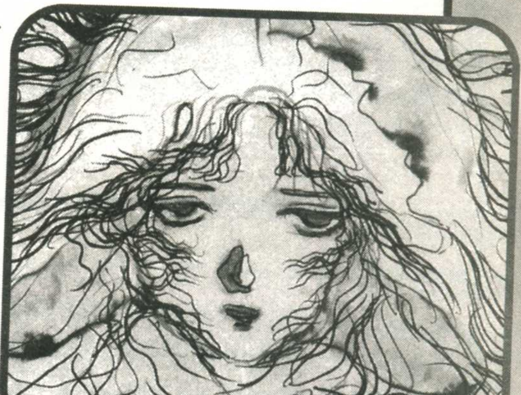
**ANIMERICA**: The elements of your movies—fish, ruins, water—do you dream of these?

**Oshii**: Ruins arise often in my dreams.

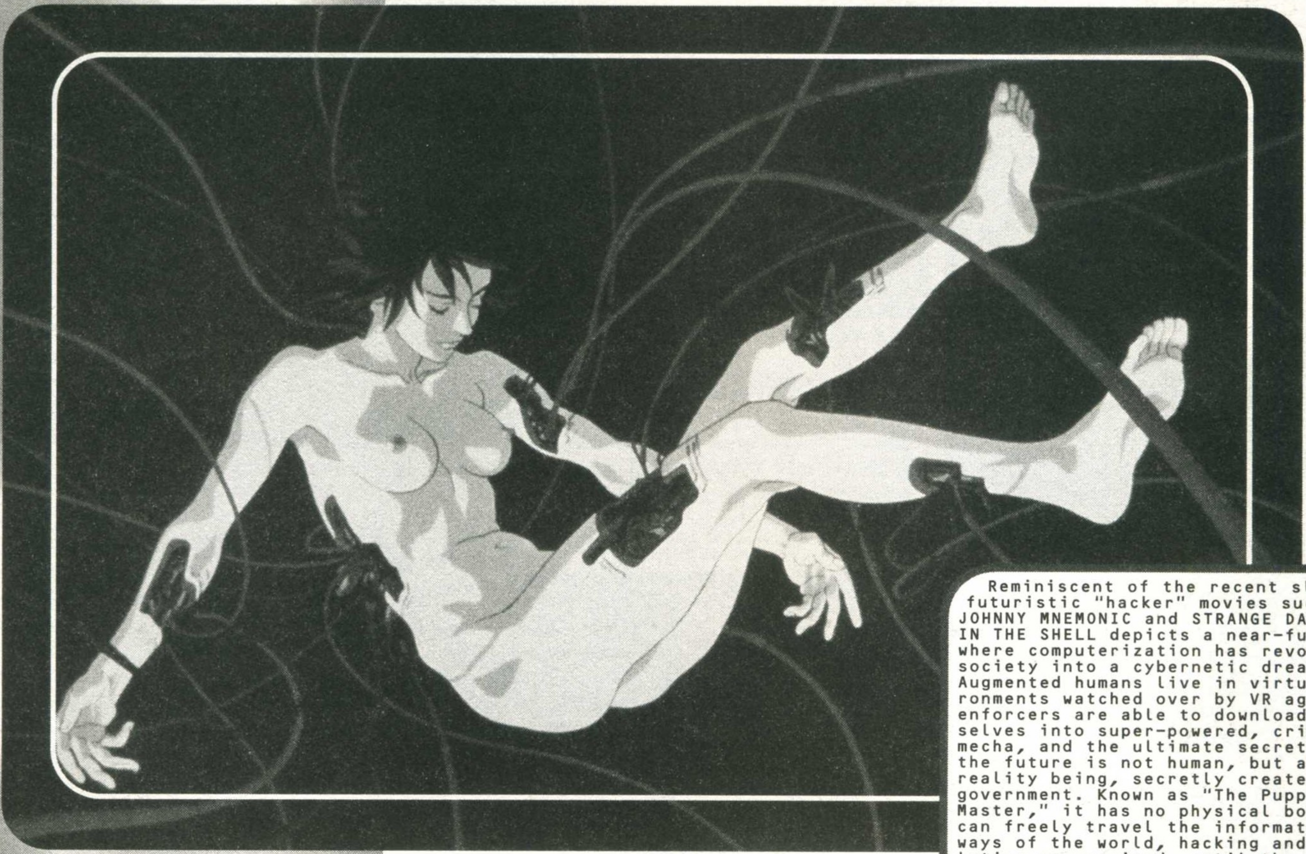
**ANIMERICA**: Are your films your way of analyzing your dreams?

**Oshii**: I would say that is about half of it.

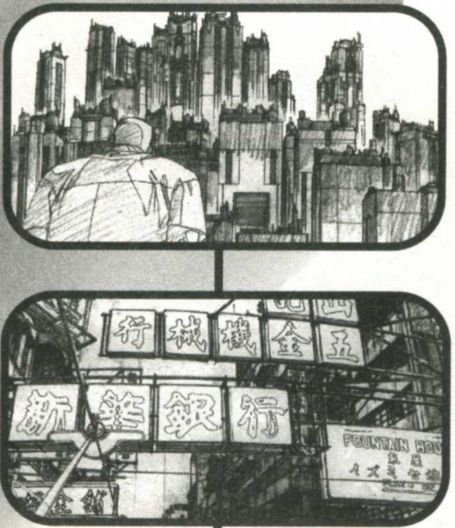
**ANIMERICA**: You've also done live-action films, yet you're known here



Oshii's ANGEL'S EGG is a cryptic visual feast, featuring delicate and fantastical designs by Yoshitaka Amano (VAMPIRE HUNTER D). The story follows the meanderings of a fragile waif and her "egg," which she believes contains an angel. She is met during her travels by a soldier carrying a crucifix-like weapon on his back, and the two travel the blasted landscape until the frustrated soldier tires of the mystery and breaks open the girl's egg, which is then shown to contain nothing. Though ANGEL'S EGG has almost no dialogue, the film's complex allegorical symbolism (the end of the film featured, among other things, angels rising from the sea into heaven) had nearly everyone who has ever seen it scratching their heads in confusion.



Reminiscent of the recent slew of futuristic "hacker" movies such as JOHNNY MNEMONIC and STRANGE DAYS, GHOST IN THE SHELL depicts a near-future world where computerization has revolutionized society into a cybernetic dreamscape. Augmented humans live in virtual environments watched over by VR agents, law enforcers are able to download themselves into super-powered, crime-busting mecha, and the ultimate secret agent of the future is not human, but a virtual reality being, secretly created by the government. Known as "The Puppet Master," it has no physical body, and can freely travel the information highways of the world, hacking and manipulating as required, until the prototype agent decides that it has the right to live a physical life. It appears and makes a demand for asylum, when it is refused it just as quickly disappears. But how do you capture a being that is nothing but a ghost? The cyborg agent Motoko Kusanagi is sent in pursuit of the Puppet Master and what follows is a computerized chase from one body to the next, animated with advanced computer graphics combined with traditional cel animation in Oshii's moody style.


行械機金五
新絲銀行
FOUNTAIN HOU

Oshii's vision of a future Tokyo was based on numerous photos of modern-day Hong Kong, and like BLADE RUNNER, GHOST IN THE SHELL's cyber-cityscape is an overgrown, anachronistic multicultural metropolis, filled with the decaying architecture and relics of past eras packed cheek to jowl with the sleek technology of today.

only for your anime. Can you tell us a little about your live-action work, such as ***TALKING HEAD***?

**Oshii**: It's a mystery set in an anime studio. All of a sudden the director disappears in the middle of a film. Another director gets hired, with two missions: complete the anime production and find the missing director.

**ANIMERICA**: When did it come out?

**Oshii**: About five years ago? Four years? I can't remember. [LAUGHS]

**ANIMERICA**: What was your reason for making ***TALKING HEAD***?

**Oshii**: Back then, I was working on a big anime project, and all of a sudden, Bandai canceled it. I was so upset that I asked Bandai if I could direct something else, and they said "Do whatever you want."

**ANIMERICA**: What project was that?

**Oshii**: [LAUGHS] It's a secret.

**ANIMERICA**: Secret? Does that mean we'll see it someday?

**Oshii**: I can't really say, you know.

**ANIMERICA**: Someone who works in the industry, a studio head, once told me that ***TALKING HEAD*** exposes what it's really like to be an animator.

**Oshii**: All of the people in the film are modeled after people I actually know, people I've worked with in the industry. I killed them all. [LAUGHS]

**ANIMERICA**: How is directing live-action different from directing animation?

**Oshii**: Directing anime is much more stressful. With live-action, every shooting day is different, and I can work out my stress through the work. And after it's done, the sake tastes better too. [LAUGHS]

**ANIMERICA**: What about some of your other live-action films, such as ***AKAI MEGANE***? [*"Red Spectacles," a combat-action story in a socially collapsed Tokyo—Ed.*]

**Oshii**: That was made ten years ago, and I made a sequel, ***KEREBEROS***, based on the manga, or as it's called in English, "***PANZER CORPS***" [*which ran in the British magazine **MANGA MANIA**—Ed.*] about five years ago. However, the story in ***KEREBEROS*** actually takes place earlier than that of ***AKAI MEGANE***. It's like ***STAR WARS***—the third film will put everything in order.

**ANIMERICA**: Getting back to anime, you said that when you make a movie, you consider first the city environment it is set in— and I've noticed that in the ***PATLABOR*** movies, Tokyo is itself an actor—the first one is set in the summer and the second one is set in winter. Each film involves an investigation, but the season lends a real mood, a sensation to it.

**Oshii**: Yes, of course. It is meant to achieve a psychological effect.

**ANIMERICA**: Most Americans, I think, will be surprised to see an anime film as political as ***PATLABOR 2***. The idea that an anime film could be about such real-world, military and political issues is still a strange one here. Since in ***PATLABOR 2*** there is a secret conspiracy between members of the Japanese and American militaries, did you ever wonder how Americans might look at the film when they saw it?

**Oshii**: I think it may be difficult for Americans to understand. The story is really based on political programs that exist in Japan, so it has quite a few deep meanings within it. In ***PATLABOR 2***, I wanted to describe the Cold War for Japan. It was a war, but a silent war. When the Cold War existed between the U.S. and Russia, the "stance" of Japan was not to be directly involved. Even though Japan *was* involved with the war, it kept insisting for fifty years that it wasn't. I wanted to describe that fake peace of Japan.

**ANIMERICA**: Do you think another military takeover, as in the 1930s, is possible for Japan today, or was that merely something dramatic for the story?

**Oshii**: I don't think that it's very possible.

**ANIMERICA**: When I look at that film, which was made in 1993, nowadays, and I see scenes such as those where the blimp comes down, and gas comes out and starts filling the streets of Tokyo…it's something we've seen happen for *real*, recently. Did you ever think that kind of thing would happen so soon?

**Oshii**: I *never* thought it would happen. When the Tokyo subway was gassed, I immediately thought how glad I was that the film was released *before* the attack happened. [LAUGHS]

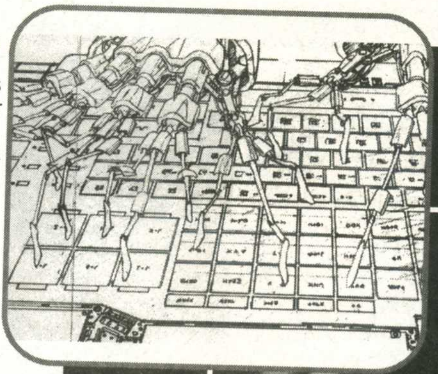
**ANIMERICA**: But in light of such terrorism actually happening in Tokyo, don't you think that people might be more inclined to take ***PATLABOR 2*** more seriously—not just as entertainment, but as an actual warning?

**Oshii**: Not quite. If people were really capable of realizing those dangers I wouldn't have to make my films.

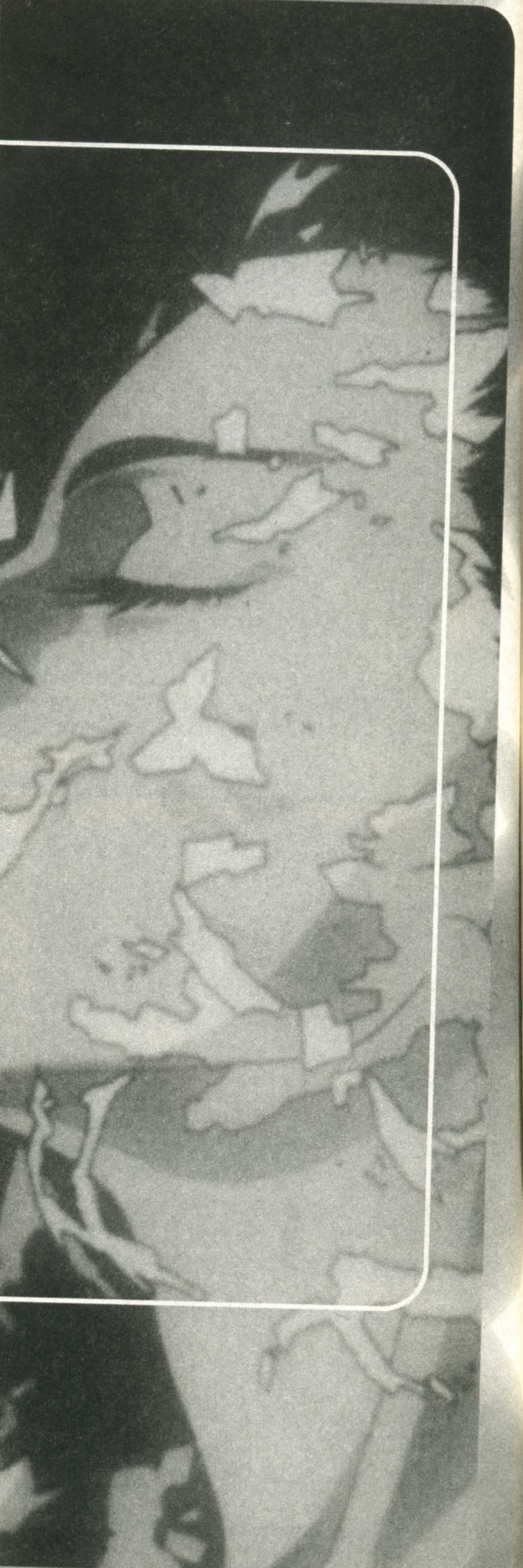
**ANIMERICA**: Does that mean you think people still aren't waking up to reality?

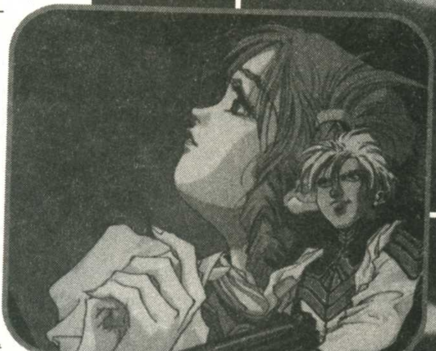
**Oshii**: That's correct. ✩

*Special thanks to Ken Iyadomi of Bandai Visual and Matt Nigro of Manga Entertainment for their assistance in arranging this interview.*



Any future, even one as utopian as STAR TREK, always contains citizens who resist adapting to the new cyberculture, as evidenced here by the robotic hands of this cybertypist, who would rather do work the "old-fashioned way" than jacking directly into the computer to download data.





One of Oshii's more obscure works, 1993's TALKING HEAD, is a ROGER RABBIT-like (at least in technique) live-action video which is intercut with anime footage, OTAKU NO VIDEO-like, featuring character designs by MACROSS' Haruhiko Mikimoto.

# DEUX EX MACHINA

*How does the animated **GHOST IN THE SHELL** compare to Masamune Shirow's original comic (published in the U.S. by Dark Horse Comics)? ANIMERICA takes a look.*

One of the first things people notice about the manga master of cyberpunk, Masamune Shirow, is his obsession with detail—when he depicts his vision of a high-tech future in his art, his futurescapes are absolutely bursting at the seams with detail. The plus side of this is that Shirow has created some of the most compelling dystopian landscapes around—in ***APPLESEED***, ***DOMINION***, ***BLACK MAGIC M-66*** and now ***GHOST IN THE SHELL***. The downside is that Shirow has such an excitement for filling in his readers on all of the minute details of his creations, that he frequently vectors away from any kind of linear narrative, making his work difficult at best to fully understand. In some ways this is actually the *point* of his work—Shirow's stories often deal with futures where individuality is seen as something of the past, a spark that's only worth tending if it proves useful to the powers-that-be. In this context, the details are far more important that the "big picture," as any character's efforts within it are ephemeral at best. Like the cops in ***DIRTY HARRY*** movies, Shirow's heavily armed assault teams are often handicapped the most by the very system they work for, which cares little for its soldiers. The catch in Shirow's work, however, is that nobody *else* cares, either. The world has grow so sprawling and anonymous that most injustices are accepted as a matter of course. In this way, Shirow's work really has more in common with Terry Gilliam's ***BRAZIL***, where corporations have gone beyond faceless and become a sort of shambling, self-aware monstrosity, despite the best efforts of those who work inside it.

Like Shirow's dystopian world of ***APPLESEED***, his ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** manga is teeming with brain-numbing new technology, and addresses a similar theme—that the very tools he creates are forcing mankind to evolve into a new kind of being capable of living in the kind of world he has produced. The main character, Major Motoko Kusangi, is a cybernetic being, almost completely artificial, who can "jack" herself into machines and other cyborgs in order to ferret out crimes. This continual out-of-body experience is the theme of the title itself—that the human mind is the "ghost" and the host body, even that not your own, is but a "shell." Shirow's questions about such a future have to do with what kind of people this sort of world produces, and what kind of worth anyone can have in it.

The animation varies from the manga on a few key points. The pod-like personal robots, or "Fuchikoma" mecha that Shirow so enjoys drawing in the manga (his illustration book ***INTRON DEPOT*** is chockablock with lithe and lovely girls jacked into similarly designed robots) are not present in the anime. In conveying the "essence" of ***GHOST***'s story, the animation is forced to condense much of the character development present in the comic (including Motoko's relationships to her comrades in the attack squad) due to the time constraints of the movie format, but does add a whole new layer of eerie understanding of Motoko's cyborg nature by one small detail that could *never* have come across in the comic—she never blinks. *Ever.*

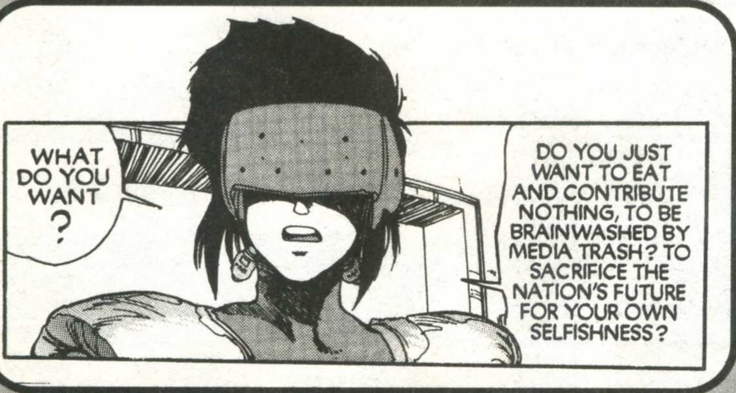
"***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** Lite," one viewer was overheard to comment at Anime East's screening of ***GHOST IN THE SHELL***. Perhaps so, but not so light as to be simple. For viewers not already familiar with the comic, ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** has a fairly high incomprehensiblity factor, but not one inappropriate for a Shirow story, most of which are pretty taxing for the reader. Although a visual treat for the eyes, ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** is *not* just a simple action-adventure story—it challenges you to think, to explore, and to do a little research before trying to uncover its secrets.

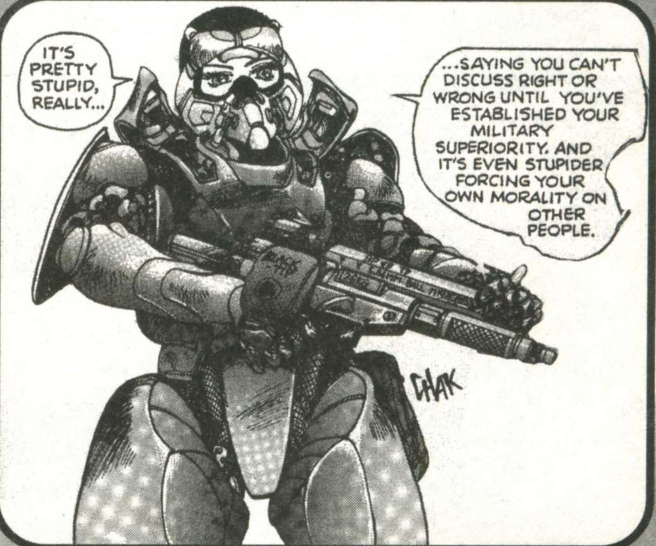
**THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY**
Camera in hand, Oshii researches and observes the urban landscape.

As a director of anime for adults (as opposed to "adults-only" anime), Mamoru Oshii has criticized anime's most revered, and financially successful, director, Hayao Miyazaki, for his self-limitation (and perhaps, through Miyazaki's brilliance, implied limitation on the entire medium) as a children's filmmaker. But Oshii himself has come in for criticism from the noted Japanese social writer and MIT alumnus Kenji Sato who maintains that Oshii is a unevolved veteran of the '60s "New Left" who must give his work the texture of dreams because he is caught in the real contradiction of a recurring theme: wanting a modern Japanese society that protects its people while at the same time wanting an agitator to shake that society and its people out of their complacency through violence.

**GHOST OF THE CINEMA**
Catch ***GHOST*** on the big screen—check our news section, ANIMEXPRESS, for ***GHOST IN THE SHELL*** theatrical dates and locations.

***STRONG WOMEN IN A WORLD OF WEAKLINGS***
*Shirow's tough-as-nails heroines. Virtual cop Major Motoko Kusanagi of **GHOST IN THE SHELL**, left, and **APPLESEED**'s ESWAT officer Deunan, right. Notice the difference in philosophy.*


WHAT DO YOU WANT ?
DO YOU JUST WANT TO EAT AND CONTRIBUTE NOTHING, TO BE BRAINWASHED BY MEDIA TRASH? TO SACRIFICE THE NATION'S FUTURE FOR YOUR OWN SELFISHNESS?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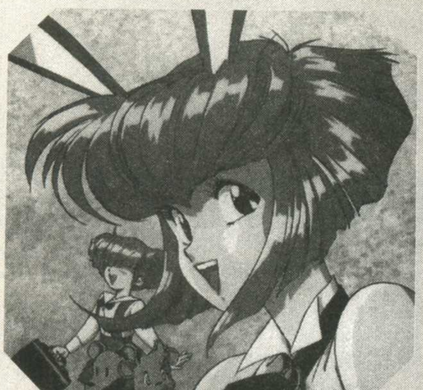

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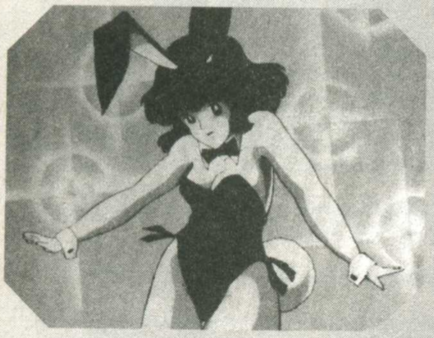
**MIRROR, MIRROR**
***OTAKU NO VIDEO*** is the title of two semi-autobiographical videos, both released in 1991—the titles, ***OTAKU NO VIDEO '82*** and ***OTAKU NO VIDEO '85*** refer to the events in the story. Both are available on a single English-subtitled tape from AnimEigo. Above, Misty-May, the General Products mascot—General Products being the Gainax company ***OTAKU NO VIDEO*** parodies.



**THE GIRL, THE RUBBER SUIT, AND EVERYTHING**
Originally formed in 1982 for the purpose of making SFX films, the 1981 **Daicon III Opening Anime** is sometimes considered their first production. Daicon film achieved the most fame for their 1983 **Daicon IV Opening Anime,** featuring the famous "bunny-girl," (above) which won an ANIMAGE Grand Prix award. After their 1985 85-minute, 16mm SFX epic ***THE REVENGE OF YAMATO OROCHI*** (below), Daicon Film was superseded by the newly formed Studio Gainax.

*What* preview? "***OTAKU NO VIDEO '82***!" Huh?!? I was very surprised.

**ANIMERICA**: And that preview was on your birthday?

**Okada**: Yes, July 1st. So then I also made a second version, ***OTAKU NO VIDEO '85***. It sold thru Toshiba EMI—hey...no one can sell my personal, private birthday video to all Japan and the United States! [LAUGHS] I was very happy with it.

**ANIMERICA**: What happened after that?

**Okada**: Well, then, when the Gainax staff asked me what we should make next, I said we shouldn't make any more anime for two years. Hiroyuki Yamaga thought that maybe we should do something else. But Hideaki Anno disagreed. As he put it, we already had the staff, so he felt we should keep going with anime projects. So I then decided we *should* continue. But I didn't really have any feelings from deep inside, and I didn't really think we should continue in this kind of work if we didn't have anything *inside* of us to support it.

**ANIMERICA**: Why did you think you had to wait two years before you could work on another anime project? Is that because you thought you'd need two years for a really good idea?

**Okada**: No, I meant we needed time to think about *why* we should make more anime, or perhaps we should move on to another genre. Gainax, after all, started out as Daicon Film, which was not an animation circle or club. Daicon Film was about live-action SF and *tokusatsu* special effects. We made two films, ah....

**ANIMERICA**: ***KAIKETSU NÔTENKI***?

**Okada**: [LAUGHS] No, ***KAIKETSU NÔTENKI*** was my own private film, and I directed it on my own. The two films I meant were ***AIKOKU SENTAI DAI NIPPON*** (*"Patriotic Task Force Great Japan"*), and ***KAETTE-KITA ULTRAMAN*** (*"The Return of Ultraman"*). Making ***KAETTE-KITA ULTRAMAN*** was a very exciting experience for us, and during the production of ***HONNEAMISE***, Yamaga planned that someday, we'd make a feature-length live-action film. So, my plan was always to make three anime productions and then move on to live-action. Because...well, for example, I don't like the second series of ***UCHÛ SENKAN YAMATO*** (*"Space Cruiser Yamato"*). I thought ***YAMATO***'s first TV series and the movie ***SARABA UCHÛ SENKAN YAMATO: AI NO SENSHITACHI*** (*"Farewell, Space Cruiser Yamato: Soldiers of Love"*) were very good, but after that, the second series just wasn't necessary. And I think other anime fans would agree with me. Maybe somebody likes sequels, but it's no way of life for me. Challenge—new challenges, and change—are my favorite things. So that's why, after ***GUNBUSTER***, I began to make computer games, such as ***Princess Maker***. It was an entirely new and strange, yet pretty concept for a computer game—a simulation of your own daughter growing up.

**ANIMERICA**: Do you receive royalties for ***Princess Maker***?

**Okada**: No.

**ANIMERICA**: But you said it was your idea.

**Okada**: Yeah, but...I think it's stupid, that someone thinks, "Oh, it's my idea, so *I* must have the copyright." Everyone at Gainax knows that it's my concept, my game. It's difficult to explain, but that's the way I feel. *Akai* was the one who directed it, and he's worked very hard on it. The *idea* just flashed, in two seconds...but it's only an idea. The planning and the directing—that's *very* hard work. So I felt Akai should have the copyright. I was president of Gainax then, and I had the idea, but that's *ordinary*. I talked to Akai about it, and he said, "Oh! It'll be a game!" So then Akai made it, he holds the copyright for it, and he's made a lot of money off it. And that's *okay* with me.

**ANIMERICA**: I understand.

**Okada**: And so, I guess I've otakuized the computer game genre as well as anime, with such games as ***Dennô Gakuen*** (*"Cybernetic High School"*) and ***Battle Skin Panic***, and software versions of ***SILENT MÖBIUS*** and ***NADIA***. But that was enough for me, and then I had nothing more to do with computer games either. [LAUGHS] By that time, it had been two years since I had been able to decide on anything to do with anime. At that point, Takami Akai told me I should change my job. Because we're friends—not "presidents," not "producers"—Yamaga is not a "director." In the beginning of Gainax, we were all just friends. So, just like a role-playing game, the idea was that we'd switch jobs. Akai told me, "I'll be the producer, you can be the creator, and Anno can be the director." About then, Anno and I started talking about the base story of ***NEON GENESIS EVANGELION***. But Yamaga had another plan. He wanted to make ***AOKI URU*** (***BLUE URU***), part two of ***HONNEAMISE***. I couldn't understand why it should be made at all. So I said to Yamaga, Okay, this is *your* plan...I can have nothing to do with it. So he was going to produce it on his own, and Anno was going to direct. But then the plan crashed, due to problems with money and staff. Finally, after all this, I was talking with my wife, and I asked her what she thought of the whole thing and how she felt. And she said, "I think you're a stupid man, because you're still president of Gainax, yet you've made nothing for two years. It's not your way." I was very surprised to hear that. [LAUGHS] And so I decided to leave Gainax.

**ANIMERICA**: Was this in 1993?

**Okada**: 1993...1992, I think. And then later, back in Osaka, I gave my friend Takeshi Sawamura a call, because I'd heard that he was now president of Gainax. And then I heard that my friend *Yamaga* is president of Gainax, Huh? Yamaga? He's a *director!* [LAUGHS] I start thinking to myself, he's not that good at ordering around a staff, or a company. So I asked my friend Yasuhiro Takeda to call me up and explain, and he says, "Uh, I'm not on the main staff of Gainax now." *Huh?* What's happened in my—what *used* to be my company? And then the main staff explained it to me: "Okay, it's just that now there are *two* presidents of Gainax, Mr. Sawamura and Mr. Yamaga. To the press, Yamaga will say, 'I am president of Gainax,' and to the bankers and financiers, Sawamura will say, 'I am president of Gainax.'" Two

*The triangle-beaked Gaos from the recent GAMERA film.*

***Tokusatsu*** (short for *tokushû satsuei*, meaning special-effects photography) is the Japanese term for SFX films. *Tokusatsu* refers to live-action shows, not specifically the battle-team or *sentai* shows such as ***MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS*** (although the battle-team shows do fall into this category), but single-hero shows such as ***ULTRAMAN*** or ***KAMEN RIDER*** or films such as Keita Amemiya's ***ZEIRAM***, which utilize science fiction special effects.

***KAIKETSU NÔTENKI*** (above) finished in August of 1982, was a 8mm, 10-minute satire of a 1979 TV show beloved of otaku, Tsuburaya's ***KAIKETSU ZUBATTO***, which aired on Tokyo's Channel 12, now the same TV Tokyo channel that airs ***NEON GENESIS EVANGELION***. *Kaiketsu* ("Masterman") is used much the same way we would call a superhero "Captain." *Zubatto* is the sound effect of something slicing through the air, like a sword or whip. *Nôtenki*, however, is Osaka slang for "happy-go-lucky." In an additional irony, ***KAIKETSU ZUBATTO***'s sponsor was also in Daicon Film's future, the ubiquitous Bandai. In the show, wandering P.I. Ken Hayakawa, clad in a black leather (white in summer) cowboy suit, traveled the land with his guitar righting wrongs and searching for the killer of his friend Asuka, the "poor mountain-man scientist" who developed Ken's *zubatto*-powered suit for use in space travel. The lead in ***KAIKETSU NÔTENKI*** was played by Yasuhiro Takeda, co-chair of Daicon III with Okada, and now an executive at Gainax who has never quite managed to live down this role—but since Takeda and Okada are often mistaken for each other, Okada says, he seemed perfect. Daicon Film even made a sequel in February of 1984, ***KAIKETSU NÔTENKI 2***. An ultra-obscure in-joke in ***OTAKU NO VIDEO***, caught not even by AnimEigo's extensive liner notes, is the *nô* symbol on Fukuhara's apron, the emblem of ***KAIKETSU NÔTENKI***. Despite ***NÔTENKI***'s Tsuburaya origins (see ***KAETTE-KITA ULTRAMAN***), both it, its sequel, and ***AIKOKU SENTAI DAI-NIPPON*** were released on VHS by Daicon Film and sold through General Products in the 1980s.

AIKOKU SENTAI DAI-NIPPON

***AIKOKU SENTAI DAI-NIPPON*** (*"Patriot Task Force Great Japan"*), completed in August 1982, is a 8mm, 20-minute satire of Toei's long-running and various "super *sentai*" series, such as ***KYÔRYÛ SENTAI JÛRANGER***, footage from which is used in ***MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS***. ***AIKOKU*** featured the typical four-man, one-woman team, with the code names "Ai Tempura," "Ai Sukiyaki," "Ai Harakiri," "Ai Kamikaze," and "Ai Geisha." With their giant robot, they fight the sinister menace of "Red Bear," which seeks to indoctrinate Japanese youth with the tenets of "Community Science" through crimson-colored books. Reportedly, a Russian attendee at Daicon IV reacted to ***AIKOKU*** with the typical good humor of the Brezhnev era, despite Okada's insistence that the film had nothing to do with the Soviet Union.

presidents—and they don't talk to each other about what they're doing, and I don't know, either. [LAUGHS]

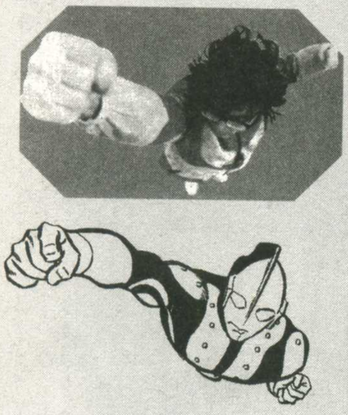
**ANIMERICA**: Why, for the purposes of the media's view of Gainax, would Yamaga be president?

**Okada**: I don't know, because it's very hard for me to ask Yamaga. If I asked him, he couldn't really explain anything to me. [LAUGHS] So I can only wonder about it, but many people have said that Gainax has changed these last three or four years. Three months after I left, many other people left as well: Mahiro Maeda, Mr. Kanda, Mr. Murahama, and Shinji Higuchi—right now Shinji's the SFX director of the new ***GAMERA*** film; he's a very talented man. In those days, many talented and powerful people left Gainax. It used to be that we worked together, we talked together, we never got enough sleep—it was very hard, but we were like a family. That was Gainax. It was no ordinary company, and no bankers would finance such a company. But things have changed. ***Princess Maker 1*** and ***2*** made a lot of money for Gainax, and it's almost an ordinary company now.

**ANIMERICA**: They've got their finances under control?

**Okada**: Yes, and they've got control of their work. They'll say, "This month we've got to do the DOS/V version of that game, next month, that screen saver, this month's for ***Princess Maker 3***, and that month for ***EVANGELION*** episode 5." [LAUGHS] They're very controlled, and I think it's a good thing for the Gainax staff, because now their creative plans can be under control too. In my day, one year we would make so *much* money, and—ha, ha, ha—next year, *very* poor. One month we'd be making films [BERZERKER SCREAM] every, every, every, day! But next month we wouldn't have any work [CRY OF DESPAIR]. That's the way it was. But now, things are under control. And I really think it's very good for their staff. But...it's not *my* way. ★

*Next: In Part Two of the ANIMERICA interview, Toshio Okada discusses the origins of Gainax as an anime studio, the genesis of* ***THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE****, and how Gainax's "chaos strategy" worked for* ***GUNBUSTER****, but not* ***NADIA****.*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**ANNO STRIKES A POSE**
According to Okada, the animator had made home ***ULTRAMAN*** movies even as a kid. But despite the more tolerant approach to fan use of copyrighted characters in Japan, as evidenced by its thriving *dôjinshi* culture, it seems films—specifically series owned by Tsuburaya Productions, creators of ***ULTRAMAN***—may be another matter. (Daicon Film's 8mm 10-minute short, ***KAETTA-KITA ULTRAMAN***, was subsequently never released to the public.) In fact, not even the title of Gainax's Tsuburaya homage appears in the articles on Daicon Film published in the two main books on ***HONNEAMISE***, although the ***B-CLUB COMPLETED FILE*** refers cryptically to Daicon's very first production as being in the style of a "*tokusatsu* TV movie" about a "hard SF hero." (This intelligence is accompanied by a not-so-cryptic shot of the cast in their Monster Attack Team uniforms.) The film is, however, mentioned by title in the storyboard book, ***AILE DE HONNEAMISE: ANIMATE COLLECTION 07***, on page 23.

**A RIGHTEOUS ROLE MODEL**
Ultraman 80 vs. Space Ninja Baltan.

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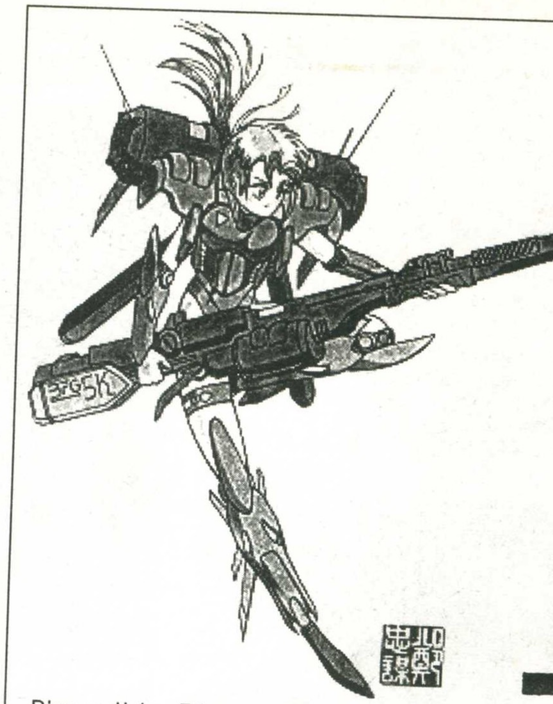

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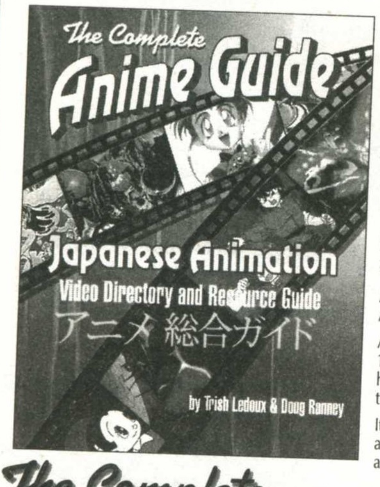
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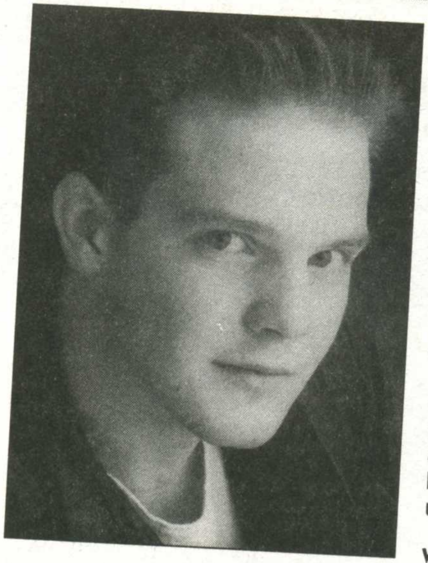
**ANIMERICA'S**

## CATCH UP WITH POPULAR VOICE-ACTORS!

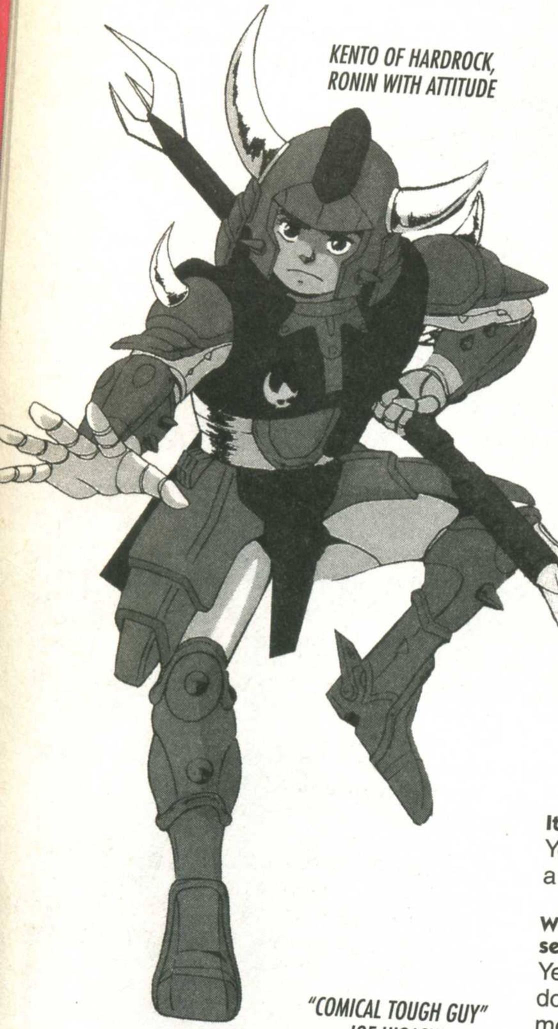
*With more anime-in-English than ever before, the voice-actors for English versions of anime are becoming as popular in America as their Japanese counterparts are in Japan! ANIMERICA takes a look at the brightest stars of the domestic voice-acting industry.*



# Jason Gray-Stanford

**ROLE CALL: *"Joe Higashi," FATAL FURY; "Ran," GREEN LEGEND RAN; "Yuta," MERMAID'S SCAR; "Ogre Slayer," OGRE SLAYER; "Haruhiko," PLEASE SAVE MY EARTH; "Shinnosuke," RANMA 1/2: AN AKANE TO REMEMBER; "Kento of Hardrock," RONIN WARRIORS***

***Interviewer: Michael Dobson***



KENTO OF HARDROCK,
RONIN WITH ATTITUDE

**How did you get started in voice-acting?**
When I first got into the business, I started doing a lot of theater, and film and television, and it was actually an open call for a series and I went in, did the auditions, and I got a call back…then got another call back, and wound up not getting the part, but….

**What was the series?**
It was ***STONE PROTECTORS***. But it was a really interesting facet of the business, so I just kept going back. They liked the work I did, even though I didn't get the part and they kept calling me back, and eventually I got a few parts here and there…and here I am today.

**Do you do anything special to prepare yourself for a role? Like research of any kind?**
Yeah, it all depends on what the role is, and, you know, what the characters are like, but I always try and do some kind of vocal warm-up, whether it's humming or singing or something, because it's important to just be prepared when you get in there—especially if you're running a voice for a couple of hours and it's a high voice or whatever it might be, but I think it's important to do some sort of warm-up and I try to do that.

**It probably helps you get a real good feel for the character, too, right?**
Yeah, well, you know, you can do different things with your voice to help you click into a character.

**When doing a character translated from the Japanese, do you want to hear the Japanese, to see how that voice-actor handled the part?**
Yeah, actually I really like to listen to the Japanese in my headphones. A lot of people don't like it, and just like to go on their own, but I like it, because I find it really helps me for timing. I can hear how long *he's* got to say it, and what he—well, not so much what he *does* with it, because it's a different language, and we have different inflections and whatnot—but more for the timing. So I know when the next line comes in, and I can kind of match it up like that, and it really doesn't bother me. I just go right over the top of it.

"COMICAL TOUGH GUY"
JOE HIGASHI

GRE SLAYER,
FOR ACTION

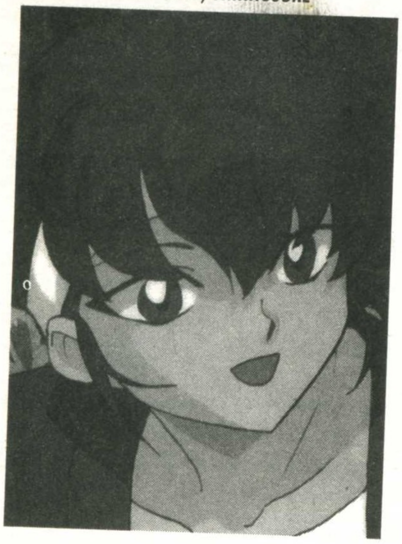
**Is there much room for improvisation in your voice-acting roles, or are you held pretty strictly to the script?**
Well, I guess there's always room for improvisation. It depends, because sometimes what the writer has written down is often what *they're* thinking in their mind, and *you're* thinking something a little different. So, not great changes, but it's okay to change a few words here and there.

**Sort of going with what you feel, right?**
That's right, and then once you get the hang of your character, that's when you can let him go a little, and it's not so much *you* improving, but it's your character going on with what he's saying. So, yeah, there's definitely room for improv.

**Do you ever watch the animation you're in?**
Oh yeah. Definitely. I'm a narcissist. [LAUGHS] Of course I do. It's actually really cool to see your voice up there, because as a young lad I watched Saturday morning cartoons…

***Jason Gray-Stanford • Hair: Brown • Eyes: Blue • Height: 5'10" • Weight: 160 lbs.***

AKANE'S "OTHER" MAN, SHINNOSUKE



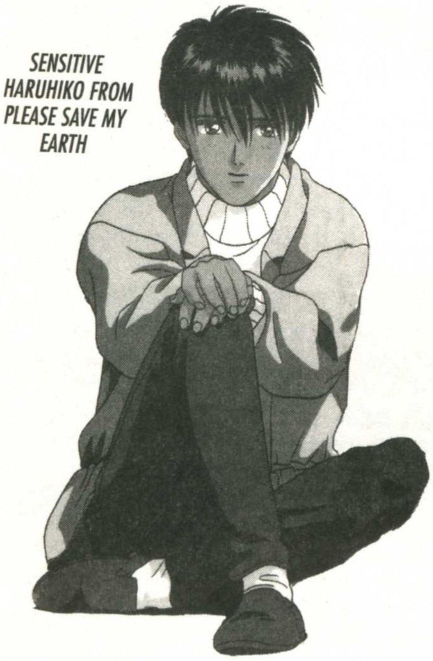
**Oh, so you did you watch animation before you got into voice-acting.**
Yes, oh yes, definitely. I think everybody does. I always watched cartoons and I think it's g and I know if I was between six and twelve now, and I was watching someone I *knew* doi those voices, I'd be fascinated by it.

**Do you have a "type" of character that you're usually cast for? Like a tough guy or something like that?**
[IN A "BILL AND TED" VOICE] Yeah I kinda, you know, do a "surfer" guy. [LAUGHS] Actual do a lot. I do some kids…I do teens and even as young as ten or eleven, depending on wl the production company is looking for. I haven't quite got into the *manly* end of it. There ar so many men and women out there who are very talented at this business, and have a lot more experience than I do, who are very very good at what they do, and Those Big Man Voices [DEEP BASSO VOICE]…like, *YEAH*…those elude me at the moment. So I'm in for the cool punks right now.

**Hey, y'know that's a good place to be. Do you have a favorite character that you've played?**
Actually yeah, I have to say Joe Higashi. He's a comical tough guy. If I could be anyone in the world, I would be him. He's a good lookin' cool guy, he's got witty lines, he's got great h and a great body. It would be him. [LAUGHS] But I like 'em all, you've gotta like 'em all. You've got to find something in each one that you can connect to and you really like.

**Do you also do live-action work?**
I do indeed. That's actually what I started out doing.

SENSITIVE HARUHIKO FROM PLEASE SAVE MY EARTH



**What was the first show you did?**
Oh, god, the first show I did. We'd have to go way, way back to grade school… [LAUGHS]

**Something that somebody'd know, that you've been in?**
Well, there's lots of shows, like ***THE X-FILES***. I did the first season of ***THE X-FILES***, when i wasn't quite so popular. I feel I'm one of the mainstays of ***THE X-FILES*** that got the show tc where it had to get to, to be so popular. [LAUGHS] But I did a lot of theater, because I was classically trained at UBC, the University of British Columbia, and I did a lot of stage when I first got out of school, then I got right into film and TV—it's a great business!—and then into voices, and now I do as much as I can.

**So you're doing both right now?**
Right now, I'm doing both. Sometimes I don't do as much as I'd like. [LAUGHS]

**So how does voice-acting compare to live-action work?**
To tell you the truth, voice-acting is a hell of lot more fun. It's wild, when you get in a room with, like, five or six other people and you're all goin' at it…because it doesn't matter what you look like, it doesn't matter what you wear…you just *go*. And it's just your voice. You don't get seen, you don't have to worry about your face being up on screen, and going "Oh, I hate that…oh, look at my *hair*. I look terrible." [LAUGHS] It's just fun. It's real fun.

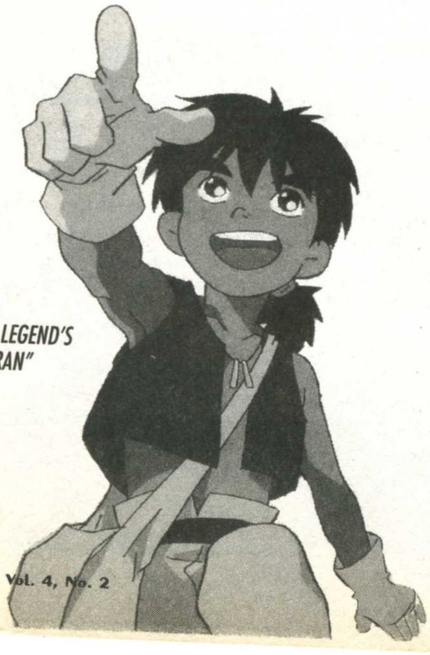
**Do you ever get any fan mail?**
In fact, I *just* started getting some fan mail. [LAUGHS] I'm very, very excited.

**What kind of stuff did they send you?**
Just questions, basically. Like a little letter with questions about some of the characters that I've played, and asking for a response, and actually I just wrote a letter back and sent a picture and stuff. I think it's great, I think it's absolutely fantastic that someone cares enough to write. But, yeah, I just started getting some…it's kinda cool. [LAUGHS]

**Do you get more mail from women than men, or…?**
I don't know, actually—probably more men. I think most of the cartoons that I've done are geared toward, you know, like, younger fellas.

**Any closing words for your fans?**
Yeah…keep watching those cartoons, and hopefully you'll keep hearing my voice.

GREEN LEGEND'S "RAN"



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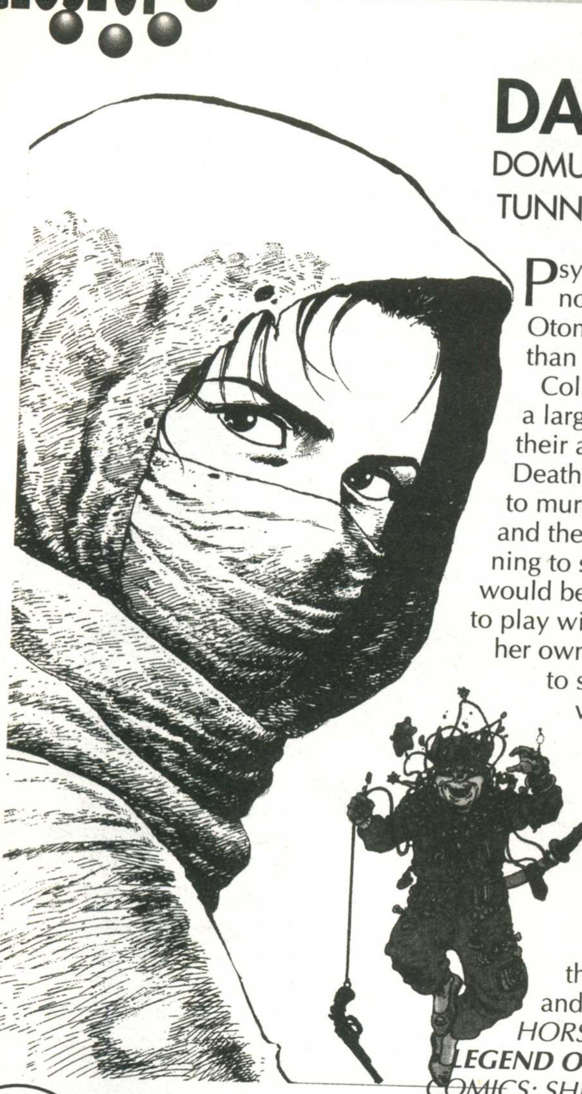
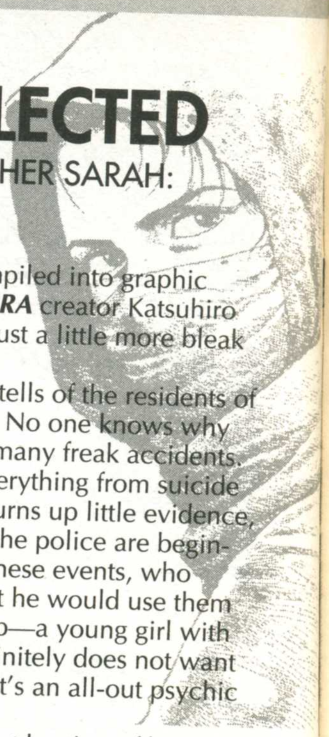
# DARK DREAMS, COLLECTED

## DOMU: A CHILD'S DREAM • LEGEND OF MOTHER SARAH: TUNNEL TOWN





Domu: A Child's Dream © 1983 Katsuhiro Otomo • MASH-ROOM Co. Ltd.
Legend of Mother Sarah © 1995 Katsuhiro Otomo • Takumi Nagayasu

Psychic war and postapocalypse nightmares are compiled into graphic novel format this spring, as two dark tales from **AKIRA** creator Katsuhiro Otomo are ready to show you a side of manga that's just a little more bleak than the average.

Collecting the entire three-issue mini-series, **DOMU** tells of the residents of a large apartment complex affected by a strange force. No one knows why their apartment building seems to be the setting for so many freak accidents. Deaths seem to occur far too often at their address—everything from suicide to murder, but the police investigation of the complex turns up little evidence, and the mystery only grows over time. But even though the police are beginning to suspect that one strange old man is the cause of these events, who would believe that an old man has psychic powers, or that he would use them to play with people's lives? But then a new tenant shows up—a young girl with her own battery of psychic abilities, and the old man definitely does not want to share his private playground with anyone! Soon, it's an all-out psychic war!

In ***THE LEGEND OF MOTHER SARAH***, the last bastion of human civilization is the space colonies, orbiting serenely above a long-ago poisoned Earth. After a terrorist attack, the colonists are forced into exile on the blighted planet below. When Sarah, a young mother, is separated from her family in the confusion, she takes on the quest to find her children on the blighted planet, facing any and all obstacles that cross her path…and everyone knows that no one is more fierce than a mother trying to protect her children. All eight issues of the mini-series are collected with an original story by Katsuhiro Otomo and art by Takumi Nagayasu. ***DOMU: A CHILD'S DREAM*** *FROM DARK HORSE COMICS: SHIPPING 20 FEBRUARY; B&W; 240 PAGES; US$17.95* ***LEGEND OF MOTHER SARAH: TUNNEL TOWN*** *FROM DARK HORSE COMICS: SHIPPING 5 MARCH; B&W; 224 PAGES; US$18.95.*☆

A Unique Perspective from our Manga and Anime Insider

## From the Forest

*As manager of MANGA NO MORI ("Comics Forest"), the largest comic/anime merchandise specialty chain in Japan, **Takashi Oshiguchi** has been involved in the industry not only as a retailer but as a journalist for more years than he can count. In addition to his many articles, Oshiguchi writes occasionally for ANIMAGE magazine and has had his own column in the comic trade journal COMIC BOX.*

### ON THE AMERICAN BROADCAST OF SAILOR MOON AND DRAGON BALL

It probably isn't too much to say that ***SAILOR MOON*** and ***DRAGON BALL*** are two of the biggest hits of all animated children's shows in Japan. They are socially recognized, and any Japanese knows about the shows. But what most Japanese *don't* know is that these two shows are being broadcast in the United States.

While animation industry people and animation magazines mention that they've heard rumors about it, as for the mainstream media in Japan, they don't mention it at all. The mainstream Japanese media has featured stories of Japanese animation being broadcast in Europe and Southeast Asia so many times it's a matter-of-fact phenomenon now. So there's no novelty seen in an American broadcast.

But actually, if the media only realized that it *is* in fact an unusual event that Japanese animation is being broadcast in the U.S., they might show more interest, but the Japanese media aren't that interested in animation in the first place. Japanese anime fans, although, have more hardcore questions on the subject such as how ***SAILOR MOON***'s transformation scenes with their suggestions of nudity are taken care of in the restrictive American broadcast, or how the American versions are handling the uniquely Japanese characters without causing misunderstanding, or if the American voices fit the characters. Other fans worry if the uniquely Japanese characters of ***DRAGON BALL*** will be accepted in the U.S., or if the violence in the abundant fight scenes will raise negative publicity.

In the end, the American broadcast of these shows raises only these hardcore fans' interest. That's because although these shows are hits, their popularity is really that of the past. The long-running ***DRAGON BALL*** manga ended last fall, and the TV show may soon follow. ***SAILOR MOON***'s manga is still running, but it's already seen its heyday.

I may have said this before, but in Japan, animated TV shows change titles every year, and fan interests change rapidly with them. Especially now that broadcast cycles have changed from a yearly schedule to a half-year schedule, this attitude is even more prominent. Most anime fans in Japan don't have the attention to spare to retain interest for past shows. (I digress, but I've personally lost interest in the former talk of the town, the ***TENCHI MUYÔ!*** TV series already. Currently, my interest would be in ***EVANGELION***.)

I already knew early last year about the American broadcast of ***SAILOR MOON*** and ***DRAGON BALL*** and wrote about it, but there was little interest for [illegible] subject in my immediate circle. This lack of excitement reaffirmed my view that Japa[illegible] quickly loses interest in past titles. If there is to be any Japanese interest on this matter, it would only be in reaction to the American media like CBS or CNN showing interest in the subject. See you next month, from the forest.

*Shôjo manga or girls' comics scholar Matt Thorn—now back from Japan, where he worked on his ongoing Ph.D. thesis—talks about the wonderful (although often misunderstood) world of all things shôjo. This time, Matt takes a few steps back from shôjo to share a brief—yet concise—history of manga in Japan.*

NEW MANGA, INDUSTRY TRENDS, AND MORE!

## EXTREME CLOSE-UP

Girls' Stuff
with MATT THORN

# A History of Manga, Part 1 of 3

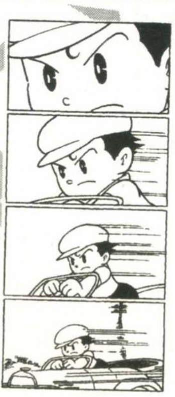
What is the origin of manga? The answer depends on how you define "manga." The word itself was coined by the famous woodblock print artist Hokusai. He combined two Chinese characters—the first meaning "in spite of oneself" or "lax" and the second meaning "picture"—to describe the comical doodles he drew in addition to his exquisite people-scapes.

A millenium before Hokusai invented the term, there were "cartoonish" drawings to be found in Japan, but whether or not pictures drawn in such a style constitute manga is a tricky question. The picture becomes clearer when we limit our discussion to works that fit Will Eisner's definition of comics as "sequential art." (Japanese writers have independently developed similar definitions of manga.) The first clear examples of such sequential art are the picture scrolls of medieval Japan, which combine pictures and text to tell stories or describe events. These scrolls look and work like modern manga or comics in many ways, but there is a crucial difference: whereas modern-day manga are produced for mass consumption, picture scrolls were singular works of art produced for an elite audience.

It was in late eighteenth-century Japan, when a growing middle class of urban merchants had developed a vibrant consumer culture, that a manga-like medium produced for popular consumption first appeared. Printed in book form using woodblock technology, *kibyôshi* ("yellow covers") were storybooks for adults in which narration and dialogue were placed in and around ink-brush illustrations, often in creative ways that consciously blurred the distinction between text and picture. Like modern-day manga, they dealt with a variety of subjects, including humor, drama, fantasy, and even pornography. In the late nineteenth century, when Japan was aggressively importing Western culture, knowledge, and technology, *kibyôshi* were replaced by a hybrid of native and Western cartooning forms, resulting in satirical publications similar to the old PUNCH magazine.

Some suggest that the Japanese have a historically rooted affinity for such visual media as manga, but for the first half of the twentieth century, Japanese manga and American comics were not all that different either in style or popularity. So why have manga flourished while American comics have floundered?

Perhaps the single most important factor in the creation of the modern manga industry was the work of one artist, the late Osamu Tezuka, known in Japan as the "*Manga no Kami-sama*" or "God of Manga." Tezuka's most popular creation, ***TETSUWAN ATOM***, is known throughout the world; an animated version was broadcast in the U.S. in the 1960s under the name ***ASTRO BOY***. In his autobiography, Tezuka described what made his manga different from those that came before him:



***NEW TREASURE ISLAND***

> "Until that time, most manga...were drawn from a two-dimensional perspective, and in the style of a stage play. The interactions of actors appearing from stage left and stage right were composed as if from the viewpoint of someone seated in the audience. I came to the realization that there was no way to produce power or psychological descriptions using this approach, so I began to introduce cinematic techniques into my composition. The models for this were the German and French movies I saw in my days as a student. I manipulated close-ups and angles, of course, and tried using many panels or even many pages in order to capture faithfully movements and facial expressions that previously would have been taken care of with a single panel. So I would end up with long works, five or six hundred to more than a thousand pages in length in no time at all.... Also, I thought the potential of manga was more than getting a laugh; using themes of tears and sorrow, anger and hatred, I made stories that didn't always have happy endings."

After drawing several four-panel comic strips for newspapers immediately following the war, Tezuka made his comic book debut in 1947 with a story entitled ***NEW TREASURE ISLAND***, which was published as an *akahon*, or "red book," a cheap form of comic book named for the gaudy red ink used on the covers. At the time, *akahon* were a small niche industry providing children with one of the few entertainment media they could afford in the crushing poverty of early postwar Japan. ***NEW TREASURE ISLAND*** changed the scene overnight, selling an unprecedented 400,000 copies.

Publishers responded immediately and enthusiastically, and had no trouble finding young artists eager to emulate Tezuka's revolutionary style. Tezuka moved to a run-down apartment building in Tokyo to be closer to the publishing industry, and quickly developed a following of budding manga artists, some of who actually moved into the same apartment building. Most of these artists went on to become giants of the postwar manga industry.

Tezuka's innovations led to a broadening of the manga market and had a consequence that would inevitably force a radical restructuring of the market: the children who were raised on the manga of Tezuka and his followers, unlike their predecessors, didn't stop reading manga when they got to middle school. Or high school. Or college.

*In the next installment, Matt Thorn describes the manga boom of the 1960s and the industry's subsequent growth, focusing on the shônen ("boys'") and seinen ("mens'") manga genres. In the last installment, he'll describe the development of shôjo ("girls'") manga and the recent boom in manga for adult women.* ☆

The Bestselling Comics, Compiled by Books Nippan, Japan (Based on Sales Figures as of 10/31/95)

## JAPAN'S MANGA TOP TEN

*When you notice how many of the manga titles listed each week are made into animated videos, you begin to understand the critical link between the manga and anime industries in Japan.*

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Yumi Tamura • Shogakukan • ¥400

5 .... ***RANMA 1/2 • 35***
らんま１／２
Rumiko Takahashi • Shogakukan • ¥400

6 ....***FUSHIGI YÛGI • 15***
ふしぎ遊戯
Yu Watase • Shogakukan • ¥400

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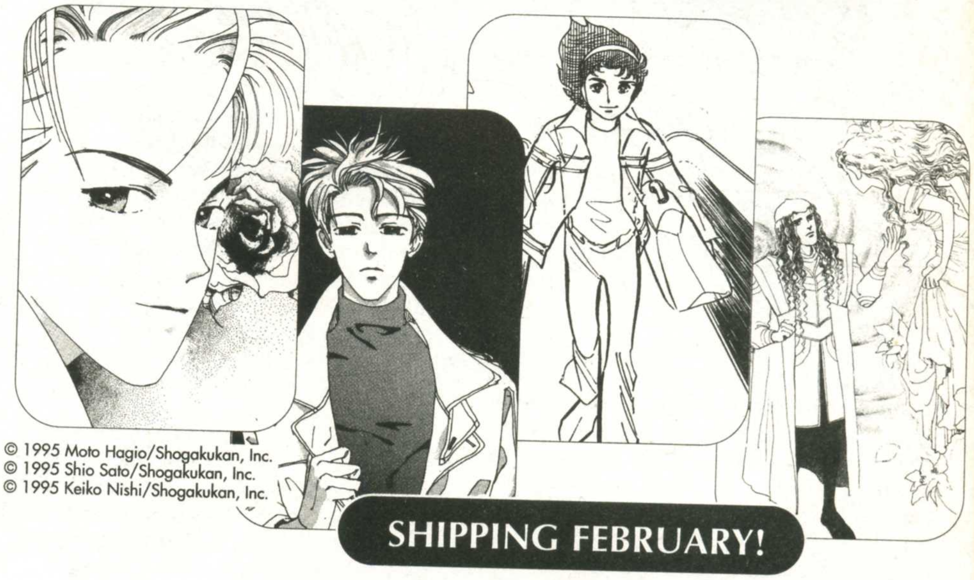

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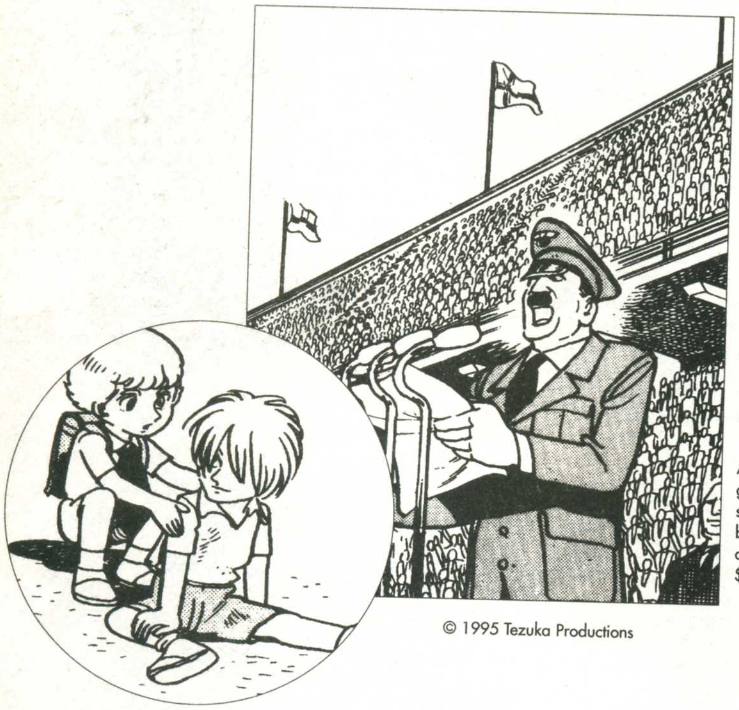

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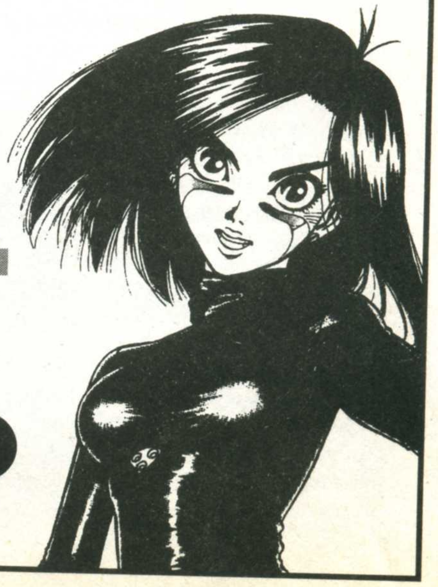

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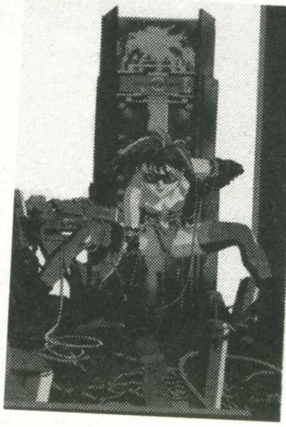

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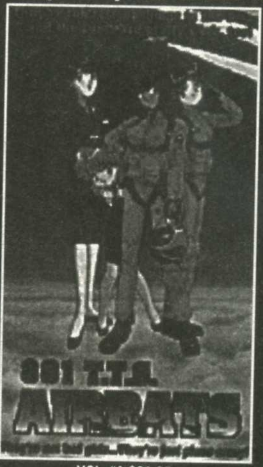
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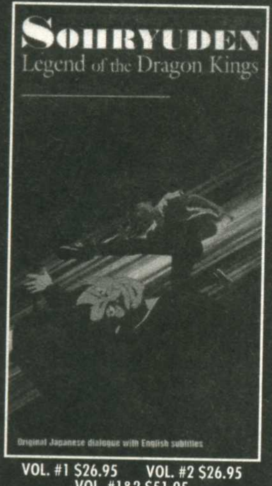
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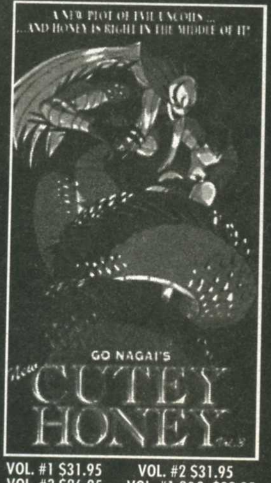
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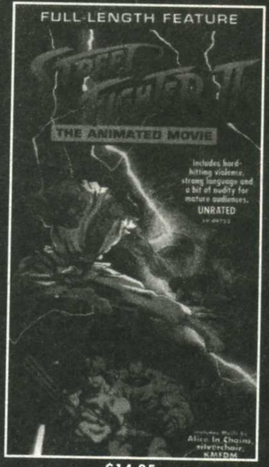
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# BEST OF THE East THE IMPORT REPORT

"Hi! I'm Mai Anime™. This section is where I get my droogies to give you people advice on what to buy, what to rent, what to ignore and what to warn your friends away from. There's no scoring system—just read the reviews, check out the stuff, and make up your OWN minds, already. If you absolutely MUST have my opinion, it's listed below."

## MECHANICAL VIOLATOR
## HAKAIDER

Directed by *ZEIRAM*'s KEITA AMEMIYA
Toei Video • 52 mins. • Genre: Live-Action Sci-Fi • Catalog No.: TD01242 (LD)• ¥4635

© 1995 Toei Video • Ishimori Productions

Now this was the one I *meant* to recommend a couple of months back. Well, if Amemiya's stuff weren't all named the same, I could get 'em straight. You say *HAKAIDER*, I say *KIKAIDER*...Oh, just go watch it. Don'tcha think the hero looks like a Japanese Kyle MacLachlan?

**MARK**

*HAKAIDER* is a 52-minute music video, and I mean that in the best possible sense. As well as the trademark Amemiya aesthetics, you get cool-looking foot soldiers, a beautifully stylized showdown brawl, a Ray Harryhausen-esque monster, and the Lone Biker of the Apocalypse himself, the grimacing, pointy-toed Hakaider. What fun!

**JULIE**

Love that Amemiya. Fab-u-lous music reminiscent of *ZEIRAM*, artsy *MISHIMA*-like dream sequences, a too-cool motorcycle-riding hero in black leather and villains dressed in white (and a robot villain named "Saint Michael"). At the end, there's even a *PLANET OF THE APES*-like dream sequence. Heady, trippy, violent fun.

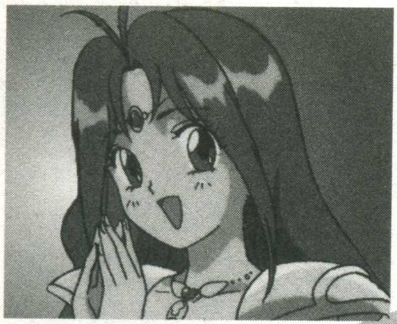
**TRISH**

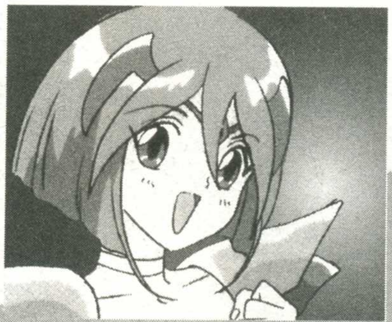
It's easy to dismiss this "*tokusatsu*" or S/FX show as "cheesy," but hey! I *like* cheese. The muddled Christian imagery—what with "JesusTown," angel-winged villains, robots named "St. Michael," even a prodigal cyborg son (black-clad Hakaider) complete with his own Mary Magdalene in the form of a spunky resistance leader—is a hoot. I pronounce it good.

**GREG**

Great designs, costumes and sets, but a bit repetitive (Hakaider getting shot up once is cool, but after the third gun barrage it's kinda old). The climactic fight in a white-walled office is worth the rental—the walls' interiors are red and the room itself does the bleeding that the robotic characters cannot.

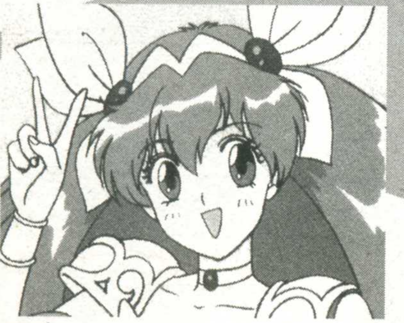
* * *

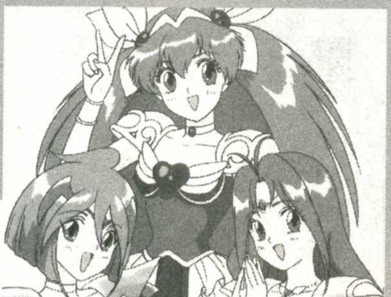




## LEGEND OF THE ANGEL OF LOVE
## WEDDING PEACH
TV VOL. 1

KSS • 100 mins. • Genre: Magical Girl • Catalog No.: JSVA-22791 • ¥3800





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Ugh! Ugh! Ugh! Aaaaaaaagggghhh!! [*We took it away before she became violent—Ed.*]

**MARK**

Not only is *WEDDING PEACH* a feeble *SAILOR MOON* swipe; not only does its depiction of the eternal struggle between light and darkness fall far short of *HAKAIDER*'s Manichean splendor; but for Chrissakes, that green-haired girl has a turd on her head! I'm now scarred for life by this time-wasting tripe.

**JULIE**

For a *SAILOR MOON* rip-off, it's weak—you get none of the fun silliness of Sere...uh...Usagi's ditzy slacker antics, instead getting a drippy-eyed girl dreaming of being an antiseptic bride. No heart-wrenching romance, not even good magical combat. (Her guardian angel does all the fighting!) Let's not even get started on the plot.

**TRISH**

I didn't watch *SLAM DUNK* thru for a reason; smart girls know what they can and can't handle. I watched this. Until my skin purpled with boils. Until my hair fell out in clumps. Until my brain ran out my ears. Did I like it? Golly, who wouldn't? Doesn't every girl want to be a preteen bride!?

**GREG**

*RAYEARTH* and *SAILOR MOON* are actually fun, but this show is just what I feared—a knockoff of a "hot" trend. Sorry, I just can't buy magical changes into wedding dresses for fighting and bouquets as weapons. Even if marriage fantasies are your bag, I still wouldn't recommend it—not even the darkish villains can save this one.

**MARK**

**GREG**

**TRISH**

**JULIE**

**MAI**

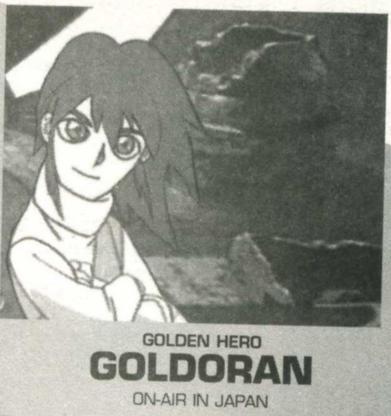
Animag veteran **Mark Simmons** is one of the Western world' most reputable ***GUNDAM*** experts, and covets rare source books on the show. He will pay big bucks for any copy of ***GUNDAM CENTURY***, in any condition. Write him c/o this magazine if you have any information.

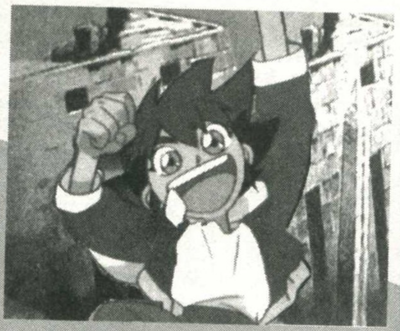
Another ye olde Animag staffer of yore, **Greg Lincoln** enjoys a good in-your-face martial arts anime more than most and would be one of the first lining up to sell his car in order to afford the ***FIST OF THE NORTHSTAR*** TV series box set, if it were ever to go on sale.

**Trish Ledoux**, aside from being editor of this magazine, is an otaky girl from way back before even the venerable old Animag, which she also edited. Her fave shows will always include ***SPACE PIRATE CAPTAIN HARLOCK***, by whom all anime men still pale in comparison.

One of the last staffers to be drawn into the Animag coven during its twilight years, **Julie Davis** will always bear the scars of being remade in the image of her ***MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM*** fan mentors, and is currently accumulating *way* too many posters and model kits of the series.

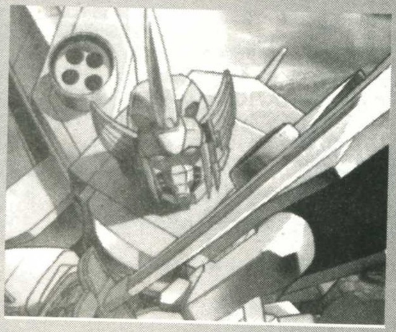
Opinionated **Mai Anime™** is the youthful ward of the crusty Major Anime™ ("Best of the West"). Mai's Import Report may contain views not all otaku will agree with, which is as it should be. *NEXT MONTH: FUSHIGI YÛGI • VIRTUA FIGHTER • MARMALADE BOY • BAKURETSU HUNTER*

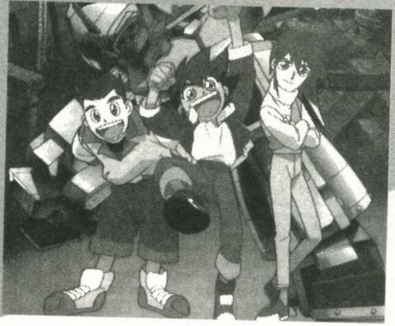




GOLDEN HERO
## GOLDORAN
ON-AIR IN JAPAN

TV Asahi • Saturdays @ 5:00 p.m.
• Genre: Transforming Mecha





© 1995 Sunrise • Nagoya TV

When I get a super robot, it'll be just like the Goldoran. No fancy pants aerodynamic show-offs like Valkyries or Superior Gundams for me; it's gotta look tough, see? It's gotta flex and fight, and have a sword 'n' stuff, like a superhero. I'll get my own theme song, too.

**MARK**

Silly fun from the ***TRANSFORMERS*** mold. The sixth in Sunrise's *yûsha* (hero) series, ***GOLDORAN*** features independently mobile transforming robots with a cast of whimsical human sidekicks. With wacky world-conquering villains as well as a guaranteed cascade of power-up transformations in every episode, I wouldn't kick this one out of my VCR.

**JULIE**

What little I saw I liked instantly. How can you beat the fun exuberance of characters with hair that could impale, hectic rock 'em, sock 'em robot fights, zany antics and the bright primary colors of kindergarten blocks. You just gotta love a robot show where it's actually fun to be the hero.

**TRISH**

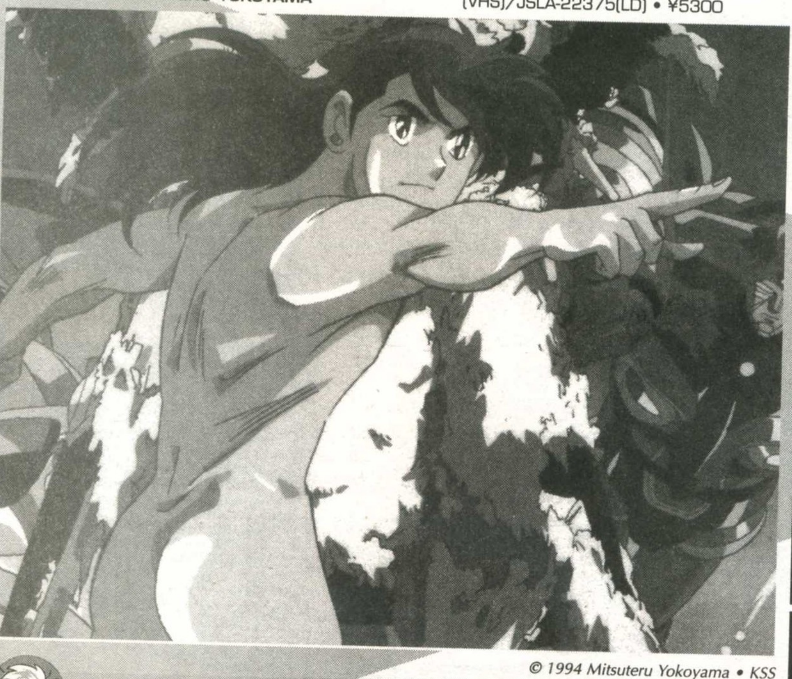
Ain't it funny how even the dumbest of anime moves faster and looks better than its U.S. counterparts? Here we get robots that transform into trains, planes and autos; robots with swords, battle axes, and gatling guns; robots that combine into the giant title mecha. Schlocky, sure; for kids only, oh yeah; but still better than **BIKER MICE FROM MARS**.

**GREG**

An inheritor to the ***TRANSFORMERS*** legacy, ***GOLDORAN*** has also got homages to ***GALAXY EXPRESS 999*** and ***HARLOCK*** (dig the shark-shaped space pirate ship that becomes a giant talking pirate robot with eyepatch and all!). It's strange and not just a little goofy, but in a good way. It's also got a pretty neat villainess.

## MARS
OAV ACTS 1 & 2
Story by the creator of ***GIGANTOR***, **MITSUTERU YOKOYAMA**

KSS • 30 mins. • Genre: Sci-Fi/Mecha •
Catalog No.: (VOL. 1) JSVA-22375
(VHS)/JSLA-22375(LD) • ¥5300



© 1994 Mitsuteru Yokoyama • KSS

Let me get this straight. Some naked guy shows up on this island, and he's an alien or something, and there's this barnacle-encrusted giant robot that can destroy the world…and like, the Sphinx in Egypt is really a alien robot. I don't get it, but…*cool.*

**MARK**

Well, it's no ***GIANT ROBO***—even though it does feature some of the same characters and gadgets—but ***MARS*** does provide the kind of earth-shaking thrills and chills I've been missing of late, along with great music. It's also nice that the much-maligned conventional forces get to blow up a giant robot with a cruise missile.

**JULIE**

One of Mitsuteru Yokoyama's classics Imagawa pays homage to in ***GIANT ROBO***, ***MARS*** is slow in spots, but you do get flying robot heads, a robo-sphinx, submarine battle action, retro style, great music and a spooky alien deadman-switch plotline. Hey…that's Alberto the Impactor! Not too shabby.

**TRISH**

It's easy, finally, to see why Imagawa was so excited by the Yokoyama shows of old. There's a retro-future thrill in plots for world domination, truly bizarre robots (that's Tik-Tok of Oz!), and aliens who've come to render judgment on the Earth. Everything seems so dire; here's the "sense of scale" Mark found lacking in **EVANGELION**. I wanna see more!

**GREG**

This pick of the bunch—a remake that lives up to the new ***GATCHAMAN*** and ***GIANT ROBO***—is loaded with mystery, tension (even without translation), action and flashy explosions. Two episodes of character action and mecha (got to see Gaia throw down with the "sphinx" mecha) left me wanting more. Rent it; good stuff.

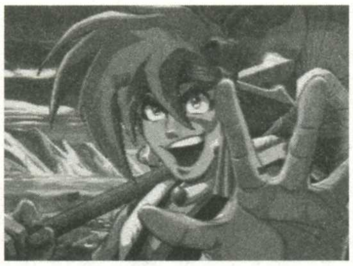
AV Interface

*Ever wanted to play a character from your favorite anime or manga? Video games can add a whole new dimension to enjoying anime. Each month, ANIMERICA's video game expert **Sergei Lee Aish** shares tips and advice to help you achieve your highest score ever.*

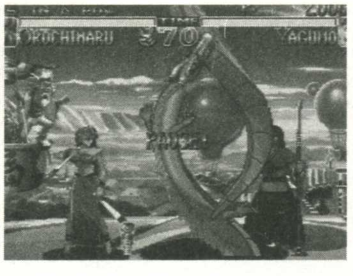
# FAR EAST OF EDEN: KABUKI KLASH

| System | TYPE | MANUFACTURER |
|---|---|---|
| Neo•Geo CD | Fighting | Hudson Soft |
| **PRICE** | **AVAILABLE** | **NOTES** |
| US$50.00 | Now | Screams and grunts by well-known actors. |

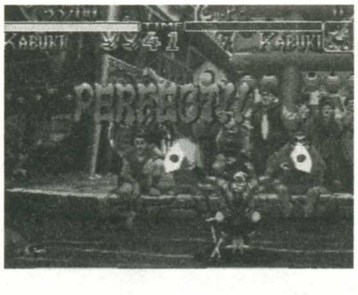
***Kabuki Klash*** marks Hudson's second attempt to capitalize on the immense popularity of the ***Tengai Makyo*** ("Far East of Eden") RPGs by starring their characters in a fighting game (the first one being a decidedly lame effort for the PC Engine Arcade Card).



Fortunately, ***Kabuki Klash*** is a decent, if not spectacular, title. However, before I start talking about the game, I'd like to apologize for the mistake in the Christmas Shopping Guide—the U.S. version of the Neo•Geo is out, it is single-speed and goes for US$350.00 with a game of your choice at most mail-order places. The double-speed version has been recently announced in Japan, no idea when and if it will come to the U.S. For your information, the games are the same—the language is determined by your system. If you have a U.S. Neo-CD, the games will be in English, and vice versa. Anyway, back to ***Kabuki Klash***....



The best way to describe the game is "***Samurai Shodown*** Lite," with a bunch of cute characters (well, most of them, anyway) happily slashing at each other with a variety of bladed weapons. The graphics are okay, but do not seem to tax the hardware, my main complaint being the lack of parallax in most stages, which really baffles me. However, a couple look pretty good, and some special attacks literally fill the screen. The sounds deserve special mention, since ***Tengai Makyo*** games are well-known for the voice-talent they harness. ***Kabuki*** is no exception, featuring Kappei Yamaguchi as Kabuki Danjuro, Ai Orikasa as Yagumo and Shigeru Chiba as the ape Manto.



The gameplay, while not venturing far from the standard 2D fighting fare, is relatively solid, featuring three kinds of slashes, three kinds of kicks, a special BC attack, dashing, rolling and air-blocking. What sets ***Kabuki*** apart from most ***SFII***-derived fighters is the lack of projectile attacks. I know, it is hard to believe, but there isn't a single Ryu clone in this game! The only way you can throw something at the opponent is to toss your weapon or, if your magic gauge is maxed out, use one of the "supers," of which each character has three or four. If you are tired of the usual Neo•Geo style moves along the line of "down, down-back, forward + BC" (that was an easy one, mind you), don't worry, ***Kabuki Klash*** goes easy on you. The most complicated move you'll encounter is the Dragon Punch motion, and all supers are done by double-tapping down and pressing a button; in other words, a great game to practice your combo skills. Definitely not a system-seller, but if you are a game fanatic enough to own a Neo or Neo-CD, ***Kabuki Klash*** would be a nice addition to your collection. See you next time, when we hit the "Play" button once more.☆

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## CD Review
# The Compact View

*You've seen the anime, now listen to the music! In Japan, animation music is every bit as respected as music from more mainstream soundtracks. **The Compact View** helps you to understand the sometimes confusing world of anime CDs by reviewing the very latest in both domestic and imported releases.*

*Music From the Anime TV Series*
**NEON GENESIS EVANGELION**
**RELEASED THRU:** King Record
**LENGTH:** 58:43 (23 tracks)
**ORDER NO.:** KICA-286
**PRICE:** ¥3000

The handsome package contains a bonus: an extra 52-page slick booklet full of line art from the first third of ***EVANGELION***. Beyond ***EVA***'s much talked-about opening and ending themes (included here), Shiro Sagisu is the composer of ***EVA***'s BGM, continuing Gainax's strategy of reuniting ***NADIA***'s creative team for their new show. Sagisu's influences here are not only the 1970s (he is a big Mike Oldfield fan) but the suspense and caper films of the '60s as well: the syncopation of "Decisive Battle" is reminiscent of John Barry, "Eva-00" has ***PSYCHO***-esque violin chops (which suddenly get Barry tempo changes in "The Beast"), and "Hedgehog's Dilemma" could have been off the soundtrack to ***THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR***. The eclectic brew includes such as the good, unabashed Muzak of "Barefoot in the Park," the ridiculous hillbilly fiddle that is Asuka's theme, and Yoko Takahashi's acid-bossa cover of the ending theme—Japanese karaoke of an American classic! The retro-SF sound!
***Carl Gustav Horn***

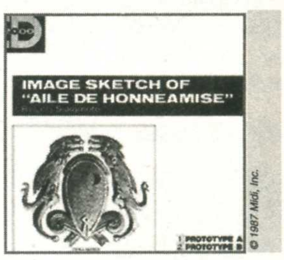
*Remixes From the Anime TV Series*
**SPEED** by **ALPHA TEAM**
**RELEASED THRU:** Strictly Hype Records
**LENGTH:** 15:41 (3 tracks)
**ORDER NO.:** SHCD-106
**PRICE:** "About five bucks."

There's a new wave of anime awareness in the American public conciousness...at least the hipper elements of it. This rave-y dance version of the ***SPEED RACER*** theme song will appeal to classic ***SPEED RACER*** fans (by virtue of it being absolutely hilarious) but it will mostly hit buttons with the young hipsters of today who weren't around to see the series as it originally aired in the 1960s, but have now seen the reruns on MTV, and become familiar enough with the time-honored campy jingle "Here he comes, here comes Speed Racer, he's a demon on wheels" to want to boogie to a rockin' version of Speed and Trixie samples. Played extensively on San Francisco local radio, this disc provides both the club and radio verions of Alpha Team's hilarious mix which sets the familiar ***SPEED RACER*** theme to a throbbing dance beat, plus a bonus track featuring an explicit retake on the relationship between Speed and Trixie, helpfully named "Hardcore." Everybody...Get down!
***Julie Davis***

NEON GENESIS EVANGELION
© 1996 Gainax • Project Eva. • TV Tokyo • NAS

SPEED
ALPHA TEAM
© 1992 Insomniak Pub. • ASCAP • Strictly Hype Music • BMI • Speed Racer Enterprises, Inc.

2000
機動戦士Zガンダム
BGM
MOBILE SUIT Z GUN
© Nippon Sunrise



© 1987 Midi, Inc.

*CD Time Capsule*
**MOBILE SUIT ZETA GUNDAM BGM COLLECTION • VOL. 1**
**RELEASED THRU:** King Record
**LENGTH:** 37:55 (12 tracks)
**ORDER NO.:** KICA-2017
**PRICE:** ¥2000

For those of you who just can't do without your ***GUNDAM*** music, this is the first of two essential ***ZETA GUNDAM*** BGM discs (there's a combo disc, with its own pros and cons, but I'll discuss that later). Along with "Sign of Zeta," the first rock-out series opening song, you get some of the most telling signature music of the entire sprawling ***GUNDAM*** saga—the ethereal, spacy themes with plenty of flutes, woodwinds and violins (tug on those heartstrings!) which give one that feel of "newtype" awe that's so important to the whole ***GUNDAM*** ethos, martial theme music for the rebellious A.E.U.G., menacing monster music that accompanies the appearance of ***ZETA GUNDAM***'s fascistic Titans, and the boppy ending theme for the whole series, with the airy lyrics "Oh, I can't help believing you..." accompanying the hero's leggy childhood girlfriend Fa Yuri running against a starry background. The poor girl just doesn't know what she's in for.
***Julie Davis***

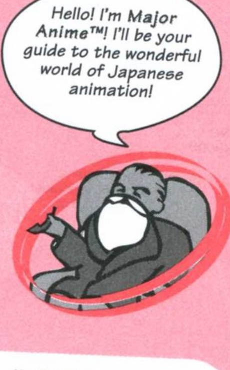
**IMAGE SKETCH OF AILE DE HONNEAMISE**
**RELEASED THRU:** Midi, Inc.
**LENGTH:** 14:22 (4 tracks)
**ORDER NO.:** MID-1501
**PRICE:** ¥1820

***IMAGE SKETCH OF AILE DE HONNEAMISE*** is a four-song EP that came out in late 1986, a sneak preview of Ryuichi Sakamoto's groundbreaking soundtrack for ***THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE*** which itself came out on 21 February 1987—two days after the world premiere of the film. In one sense, however, ***IMAGE SKETCH*** *is* Sakamoto's soundtrack, for it contains the four "prototypes" which were, in their variations, the backbone of the film's score. "Prototype A" is Sakamoto's rough draft of the opening theme, which has a slightly downbeat note compared to the film version. "Prototype B" is the acoustic-piano wistful waltz for one known as "Leiqunni's Theme" on the final soundtrack, whereas "Prototype C," used often during ***HONNEAMISE***'s construction montage, is also the blueprint for "Out, To Space," played during Shiro's closing monologue, and "Prototype D" is the Royal Space Force anthem. Only on ***IMAGE SKETCH*** can you get Sakamoto himself singing it!
***Carl Gustav Horn***

Subtitled and Dubbed Anime Review

# BEST OF THE West

*The American anime industry has come a long way since the early days of* ASTRO BOY*. Several U.S.-based companies are making it easier than ever for non-Japanese speaking fans to keep up with their favorite shows. In this section,* ANIMERICA *takes a look at the best of anime in America.*


Hello! I'm Major Anime™! I'll be your guide to the wonderful world of Japanese animation!

Here's how the ANIMEICON™ system works: Each icon represents a particular theme peculiar to the anime art form. Those titles deemed to have a fair amount of said theme are indicated by the helpful icons listed below. Whether you're a mecha-head, a fan of the "Girls with Guns" subgenre, or simply a concerned viewer worried about possible nudity, the ANIMEICON™ system will give you the answers you need.

**Courtesy Breasts**
Brought to you by your favorite animators. (NOTE: Anything with an appearance by ***LUPIN III***'s Fujiko or animated by super otaku production studio Gainax gets an automatic mention.)

**ESP**
Because a mind is a terrible thing to waste. Includes both the "harmless" variety (***KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD***), as well as the "malignant" strain (David Cronenberg's ***SCANNERS***).

**Evil Overlord**
Megalomania, anime style. They may not start out intending to take over the world, but they inevitably get around to it.

**Idol Singers**
WARNING: The Surgeon-General has determined that cutesy pop singers of questionable talent may prove hazardous to your health. Also recognized as a leading cause of tooth decay.

**Kung Fu Fightin'**
Martial arts from all walks of life—from the zaniness of ***RANMA 1/2*** to the postapocalyptic existential angst of ***FIST OF THE NORTH STAR***.

**Masterpiece Theater**
Often considered one of the classics of anime; may contain socially redeeming themes disturbing to some viewers.

**Mondo Mecha**
From spaceships to cyborgs to giant wooden robots. The kind of mechanical devices or "mecha" you'll find only in anime.

**Naughty Tentacles**
'Nuff said.

**Not of This World**
Close encounters of a less-than-friendly kind. Invaders come from other dimensions, other worlds, sometimes even the netherworld, but they never come in peace, and they often leave in pieces.

**Super Science**
Traditional sci-fi gadgets, themes and plot devices, both silly and serious (may include mad scientists).

**Ultraviolence**
May include severed body parts of indeterminate origin; possibly gratuitous weaponry and/or explosions (the infamous "Girls with Guns" or "Babes with Bazookas" anime subgenre).

**Romantic Hijinks**
Boy meets girl; boy loses girl; girl comes back with her sisters; the neighbors interfere; etc. Your basic teenage love comedy...with a twist.

!#&@ **Bad Words**
More anime in English means more (often gratuitous) !#&@, *@!#, and #*&@. Use caution with younger viewers.

## 801 T.T.S. AIRBATS

♥

***AIRBATS*** starts out in a kind of ***PROJECT A-KO***-like vein with sight gags and character cut-ups, but by the end of the first episode, it's already plotting a course for soap opera land. Like ***RANMA 1/2*** or ***KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD***, the two star strong-willed females who immediately get into a romantic tug-of-war over the lone male in the show—in this case, the squadron's male mascot. The story is basically the everyday challenges of the squadron to keep their group running—there's always a conniving general trying to shut the squadron down, or trying to make the pilots screw up a crucial flight test. Don't let the Cheez-Whiz™ copy on the back of the box turn you off from an otherwise enjoyable video. ***[AK; VOL. 3, NO. 12] SUBTITLED VHS FROM A.D. VISION; 85 MINS.; US$29.95.***

## BAOH

***BAOH*** deals with the ubiquitous evil of corporate genetic research gone wild. The story has the same kind of sci-fi mood as director David Cronenberg's film ***SCANNERS***, but it doesn't pull off the suspense as well as its live-action cousin. The way this story is set up, we perceive Baoh as invincible from the outset, so the outcome seems too predictable. Nevertheless, there are some excellent and suspenseful moments of action animation—one well-edited sequence shows the awakening of Baoh's awesome powers intercut with a demonstration at Doress headquarters of the similar awakening powers of a captive wolf with the same genetic alterations. ***[GB; VOL. 3, NO. 12] ENGLISH VHS FROM ANIMEIGO (ALSO AVAILABLE ON SUBTITLED VHS AND "HYBRID" LD; 50 MINS.; US$19.95.***

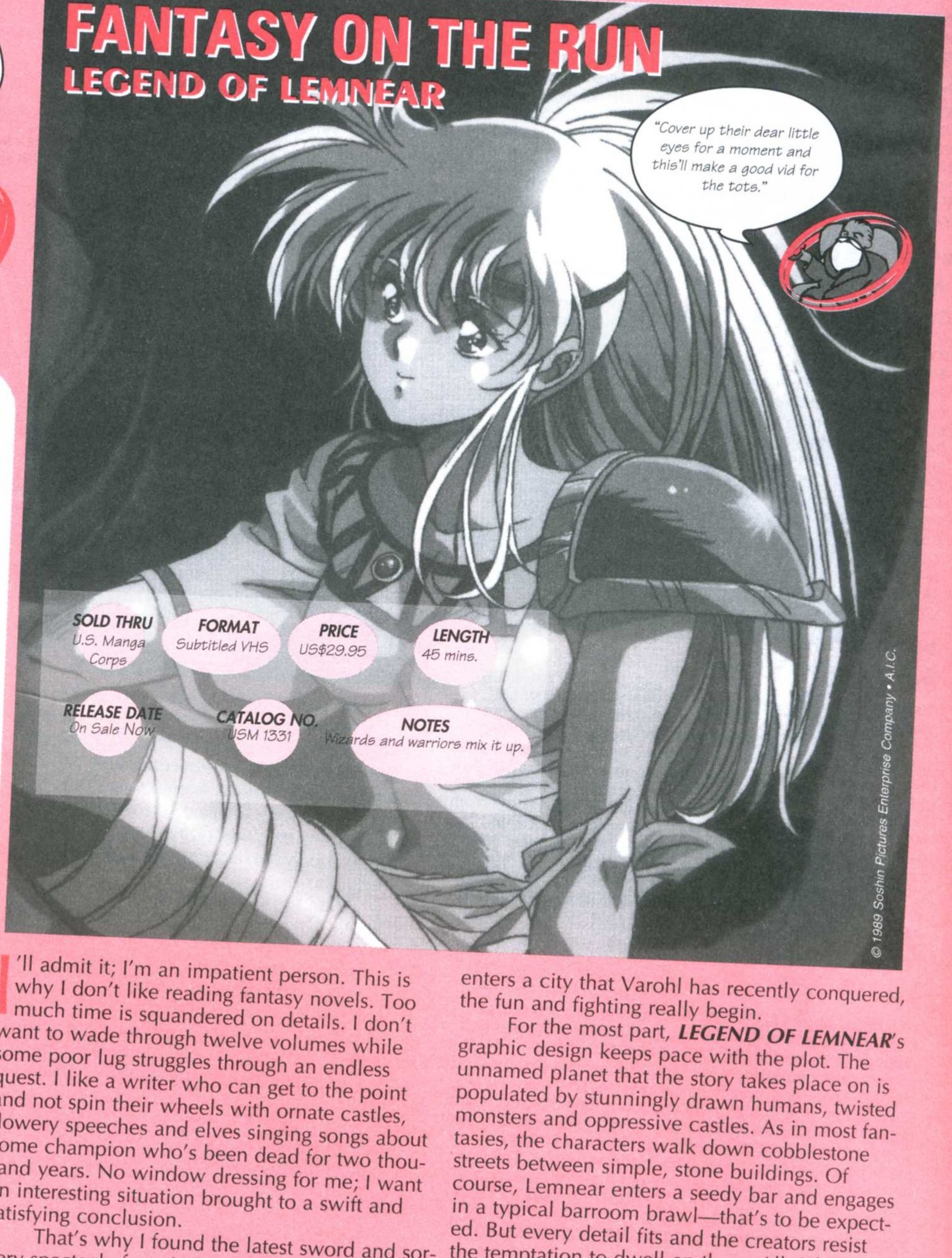
## BLACK MAGIC M-66

!#&@

The military action in this OAV is extremely realistic. The battle between the two M-66 androids and the crack military platoon out to capture them is taut and vicious. Masamune Shirow, creator of this series along with ***APPLESEED*** and ***DOMINION TANK POLICE*** (among others), brings his own signature style to anime. His big city backgrounds have a

# FANTASY ON THE RUN

## LEGEND OF LEMNEAR


"Cover up their dear little eyes for a moment and this'll make a good vid for the tots."

**SOLD THRU** U.S. Manga Corps
**FORMAT** Subtitled VHS
**PRICE** US$29.95
**LENGTH** 45 mins.
**RELEASE DATE** On Sale Now
**CATALOG NO.** USM 1331
**NOTES** Wizards and warriors mix it up.

© 1989 Soshin Pictures Enterprise Company • A.I.C.

I'll admit it; I'm an impatient person. This is why I don't like reading fantasy novels. Too much time is squandered on details. I don't want to wade through twelve volumes while some poor lug struggles through an endless quest. I like a writer who can get to the point and not spin their wheels with ornate castles, flowery speeches and elves singing songs about some champion who's been dead for two thousand years. No window dressing for me; I want an interesting situation brought to a swift and satisfying conclusion.

That's why I found the latest sword and sorcery spectacle from U.S. Manga Corps so appealing. With ***LEGEND OF LEMNEAR***, writer/director Kinji Yoshimoto (***PLASTIC LITTLE***) shows that a great deal of excitement and entertainment can be packed into a short, well-executed story. In just forty-five minutes, Yoshimoto's heroine starts a slave revolt, prevents a rape, kills a gross of bad guys, avenges her parents' deaths and engages a wizard in a battle that will decide the fate of all humankind.

The first few moments of the story set the tone of what's to follow. A beautiful woman named Lemnear is the Champion of Silver. She possesses a power that threatens Varohl, a mega-wizard whose clouds of darkness stretch over most of the planet. Varohl sends his servant Gardein to capture Lemnear. Gardein is from the slash and burn school of bad guys. When he can't find the warrior woman, he torches her village and kills her family. He also abducts Messhu, the Champion of Bronze. Gardein uses this young man as bait to lure Lemnear into Varohl's sphere of influence. Once Lemnear enters a city that Varohl has recently conquered, the fun and fighting really begin.

For the most part, ***LEGEND OF LEMNEAR***'s graphic design keeps pace with the plot. The unnamed planet that the story takes place on is populated by stunningly drawn humans, twisted monsters and oppressive castles. As in most fantasies, the characters walk down cobblestone streets between simple, stone buildings. Of course, Lemnear enters a seedy bar and engages in a typical barroom brawl—that's to be expected. But every detail fits and the creators resist the temptation to dwell on them. All right, I can think of a couple of instances where the creators dwell a little long on "window dressing." Vuan, a fat, lecherous slave trader, is perpetually surrounded by topless, hypnotized harem girls. Though one could argue that such an overabundance of female flesh demonstrates Vuan's own perverse evil, the scenes come off as very gratuitous.

Far and away, the best visual aspect of ***LEGEND OF LEMNEAR*** is the flying fortress Valkysas. This black, sinister abode is the ultimate representation of Varohl's nastiness. It even borrows the mecha trick of transforming into a giant. This comes in very handy when you're conquering a planet.

***LEGEND OF LEMNEAR*** may not satisfy diehard fantasy fans who are searching for a long term commitment—***RECORD OF LODOSS WAR*** would be a much better choice. But for those of us who are looking for a quick fantasy fix, ***LEGEND OF LEMNEAR*** can be an extremely enjoyable video.

*Michael O'Connell*

somewhat organic shape that reminds me of the architecture of Antonio Gaudi. The relentless pursuit of the M-66 against its erroneously programmed target, Ferris, is highly reminiscent of ***THE TERMINATOR***, but the M-66 couldn't be more different that the character portrayed by Schwarzenegger…Sybil describes them as "steroid beefed-up Barbie dolls." The abundance of gratuitously foul language may be considered offensive by some, but overall, ***BLACK MAGIC M-66*** is recommended as a visual standard by which to judge other anime productions. ***[GB; VOL. 4, NO. 1] ENGLISH VHS FROM MANGA ENTERTAINMENT; 48 MINS.; US$14.95.***

**CYBER CITY OEDO 808: DATA ONE**

!#&@

Our principal protagonist Sengoku is a fairly stereotypical anti-hero. I was instantly reminded of the "Snake" Pliskin character played by Kurt Russell in John Carpenter's live-action film ***ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK***. Not an unreasonable association since the "reforming" Cyber Police agents wear controlling collars that restrain their freedom at the risk of getting their heads blown off by their police handler. While this may seem like a tired plot line, the interaction between the three principal players of ***CYBER CITY*** gives this series a bit more depth. The science and technology seem a bit primitive for nearly 1000 years in the future. Overall, ***CYBER CITY OEDO 808*** places into the mainstream of good Japanese animation, but falls short of the excellence I have come to expect from a master like Kawajiri (***WICKED CITY***). ***[GB; VOL. 4, NO. 1] SUBTITLED VHS/ENGLISH VHS FROM U.S. MANGA CORPS; 48 MINS.; US$29.95/$19.95.***

**DEVILMAN • VOLS. 1 and 2**

!#&@

It's a demon-eat-demon world in the opening of creator Go Nagai's ***DEVILMAN*** series. Nagai uses the series to explore issues related to overpopulation and its impact on the environment. Are demons the natural predators for an exploding human race? These thoughts give the translator/rewriter of this ME-produced English version to speculate on "demon-busting, kick-ass technology." It would seem to be some kind of technology which could tackle the likes of battles which give series animators many opportunities to demonstrate their skill at seamless shape transformations, and to create horrifying images which would challenge the imaginations of John Carpenter fans. ***[GB; VOL. 3, NO. 7] ENGLISH VHS FROM MANGA ENTERTAINMENT; 55 MINS.; US$14.95.***

**DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS**

***DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS*** watches like a good horror novel reads, with new fears being uncovered in each gothic chapter. Produced in 1992, the animation has the benefit of some excellent staff names such as Taro Rin, Akinori Endo, Hideaki Anno, and Yoshiyuki Sadamoto. Streamline's adaptation is first-rate, but if I may voice one complaint, it would be that the sound levels may take a little tinkering on your TV. You might want to avoid the problem entirely and turn the thing up, and let the loud sounds shock you. This is a horror film, after all, and if you've got the stomach for a good, creepy, animated chill, ***DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS*** is definitely a memorable nightmare. ***[AK; VOL. 3, NO. 7] ENGLISH VHS FROM STREAMLINE PICTURES; 50 MINS.; US$19.98.***

**FATAL FURY: THE MOTION PICTURE**

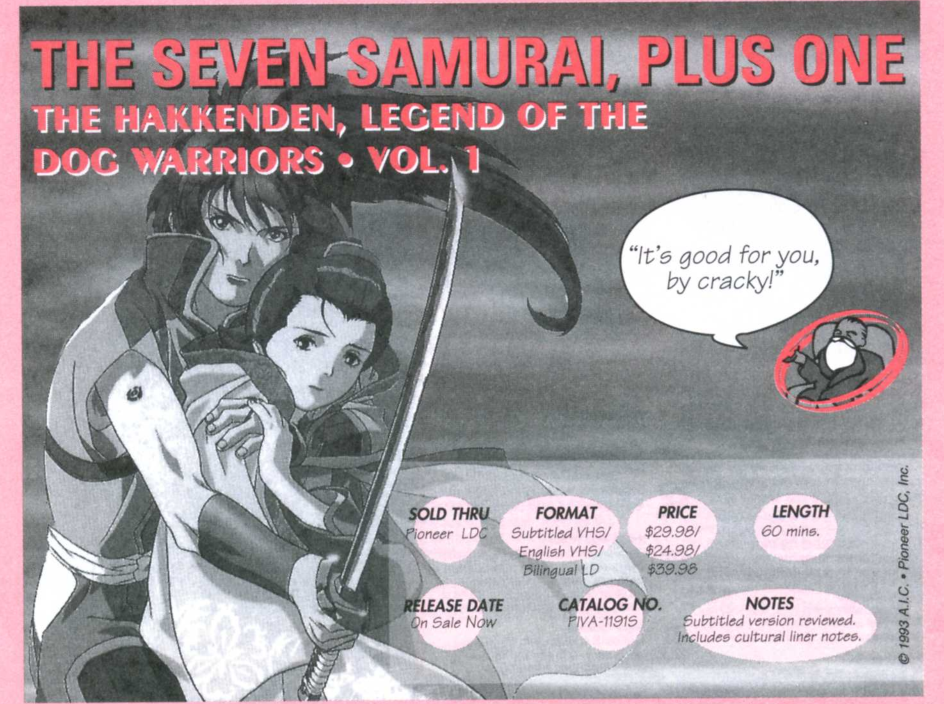
Velvet-tongued villain Laocorn has obtained several pieces of the "Armor of Mars," and has only to find three more to attain godlike power. For the love of her brother, Laocorn's sister Sulia finds Terry Bogard, the man who defeated Wolfgang Krauser from ***FATAL FURY 2***, and begs him to help her stop her brother—for it appears that the armor has, bit by bit, twisted her brothers once-loving soul. Those prone to tears should bring tissues for the ending, which, though great, is bought through tragedy. This release shows to me how far American voice-acting has come in the years since the shaky ***AKIRA*** dub, and I guess now might be the right time to give them a chance again. I hope ***FATAL FURY: THE MOTION PICTURE*** passes through many of your VCRs soon—it deserves to be seen. ***[GL; VOL. 4, NO. 1] ENGLISH VHS FROM VIZ VIDEO; 100 MINS.; US$19.95.***

**GALL FORCE: NEW ERA 1**

Years after the Cyberoid war, the Earth government is faced with the almost impossible task of terraforming its devastated planet. The human population is crowded into

# THE SEVEN SAMURAI, PLUS ONE

## THE HAKKENDEN, LEGEND OF THE DOG WARRIORS • VOL. 1


"It's good for you, by cracky!"

| | |
|---|---|
| **SOLD THRU** | Pioneer LDC |
| **FORMAT** | Subtitled VHS/<br>English VHS/<br>Bilingual LD |
| **PRICE** | $29.98/<br>$24.98/<br>$39.98 |
| **LENGTH** | 60 mins. |
| **RELEASE DATE** | On Sale Now |
| **CATALOG NO.** | PIVA-1191S |
| **NOTES** | Subtitled version reviewed.<br>Includes cultural liner notes. |

© 1993 A.I.C. • Pioneer LDC, Inc.

The video begins with a beautifully animated opening sequence in which each of the eight fabled Dog Warriors appear set against their own picturesque, very *Japanese* background, ranging from a small plane engulfed in falling cherry blossoms, to a temple covered with snow, to a nighttime river with fireflies serving as the only source of light. From there on in, I was hooked.

***THE HAKKENDEN*** is based on the 18-chapter Japanese literary classic entitled ***NANSO SATOMI HAKKENDEN*** by Baku Takizawa. It's the story of how eight warriors, each representing a different samurai virtue, try to end a curse which has tormented them all their lives, but entwined them as well. Presentation-wise, it appears very factual, but it's a complete work of fiction (don't try quoting it in your Japanese history class).

Around 1457, two families (Satomi and Anzai) existed in an area called Awa. Unfortunately, when the Satomi (on the brink of starvation) ask the Anzai for help, the Anzai instead attack their weakened neighbors. With the aid of their leader Kagetsura's devilish power, the Anzai are on their way to victory, but ten days later, the Satomi launch a counterattack, led by the warrior Daisuke. The would-be ambush is quickly defeated, thanks again to Kagetsura's power.

Posed with the choice of either surrendering or committing suicide, the desperate Satomi leader, Yoshinari, makes a joke with the family dog about saving the clan…one which he would soon regret. In a short amount of time, Yatsufusa (the dog) surprises everyone by returning with Kagetsura Anzai's head, which leads to the Satomi's turnaround victory over the then-leaderless Anzai. *Why* was a mere dog able to do what many warriors couldn't? Unbeknownst to the Satomi, a curse was weaving its web upon them….

Time passed and everyone is happy, except Yatsufusa. Then Yoshinari reveals his hidden shame…his promise that if Yatsufusa saved the Satomi clan, the dog would be married to Princess Fuse! (Talk about the mother of all plot twists!) Surprisingly enough, Princess Fuse agrees to go along with this plan, and both she and the dog leave for the woods. But before she leaves, her mother gives her a necklace of prayer beads on which eight large beads are now glowing.

A year passes and Princess Fuse is plagued with nightmares. Amazingly, Daisuke has survived the ordeal with Kagetsura and decides to bring the princess back. Unfortunately, when he attempts to kill Yatsufusa (with a 14th century rifle, mind you—ouch!) he also shoots Princess Fuse. As Daisuke holds his dying princess, she tells him that a curse has been put upon her family, and it must somehow be broken. She then proceeds to end her suffering by committing suicide. Suddenly, her necklace breaks apart, the eight beads shoot up into the sky and vanish…and so begins ***THE HAKKENDEN***.

That covers the first episode (whew!). The next episodes introduce the warriors themselves, who all possess a bead marked with the virtue which reflects their character, a peony birthmark, and a last name beginning with *inu*, which means "dog" in Japanese. (This isn't made very clear in the animation but, assuming the story is sticking with the original legend, the eight warriors are reincarnated spirits of the dog, split into the eight virtues marked by the beads.)

The only quibble I have with ***THE HAKKENDEN*** is that while some scenes are beautifully animated, others look very cartoony and sloppy. For example, the scene when Daisuke's party confronts Kagetsura (which should be eerie and suspenseful) becomes almost goofy by a warrior's overly exaggerated lower lip movement. Why this was done, I have no idea.

On the other hand, one problem people may have with this series is that it can get rather confusing. The best thing to do is pay very close attention to names and dates. Write them down if you have to, and don't be afraid to watch it more than once (god knows I did). Finally, I really think this is a wonderful series full of drama, irony, and heart-jerking tragedy. So if you're looking for some quality, enjoyable anime to watch, or are a fan of Akira Kurosawa films and could use an extra jolt of samurai, castles and ancient Japan, don't pass ***THE HAKKENDEN*** up…you'll be sorry if you do.

***Kit Fox***

domed cities that appear palatial, but are actually on the brink of economic disaster. As a piece of science fiction, the first episode of ***GALL FORCE: NEW ERA*** has a lot in common with both serious sci-fi classics like ***LOGAN'S RUN*** and more lighthearted parodies like ***THE JETSONS***. Like both of the aforementioned stories, ***GALL FORCE: NEW ERA*** explores the idea of a wonderful, futuristic city where the hardest job involves pushing buttons. But despite the story's potential, it is let down by some rather unimaginative visual design. If ***GALL FORCE*** seems unimaginative now, I guess that just goes to show how much has changed since then. ***[MO; VOL. 3, NO. 12] SUBTITLED VHS FROM U.S. MANGA CORPS; 50 MINS; US$29.95.***

**GOSHOGUN: THE TIME ÉTRANGER**

If you remember the theme "Ma-ma-ma-ma, ma-ma-***MACRON ONE***," you have a vague introduction to the characters in this rather unusual OAV. ***ÉTRANGER*** has a strong, attractive heroine (who, like the characters of ***MACROSS PLUS***, isn't afraid to have a nose), sporting a fetishistic .44 Magnum which she has realistic problems with, a colorful supporting cast, plenty of action, and a fierce, baffling, and often horrific life-or-death struggle. Ten years after its release in Japan, ***ÉTRANGER*** still holds up well enough to command your attention. ***[CGH; VOL. 3, NO. 9] SUBTITLED VHS FROM U.S. MANGA CORPS.; 90 MINS.; US$29.95.***

**GREEN LEGEND RAN**

At times, this story reminds me vividly of Frank Herbert's desert planet saga, ***DUNE***. The sands are like seas exploited by enterprising humans and patrolled by the armored ships of the Rodoist navy. In an echo of the film adaptation of ***DUNE***, the bishops are enormous, deformed mutants that reminded me of the spice navigators who could fold time and space. The Box Set includes a T-shirt, postcards and a 20-page booklet. Pioneer has given this unique collection the best treatment possible, and if this doesn't convert U.S. anime fans to prefer laser disc over VHS, nothing will. ***[GB; VOL. 3, NO. 10] BILINGUAL LD FROM PIONEER LDCA; 3-45 MIN. EPISODES; US$99.98.***

**JUDGE**

While this may seem like a simple story of betrayal and deserved revenge, it is built upon many elements that are unfamiliar to my cultural perspective. We are shown evil people committing evil deeds unpunished until they trip the appearance of the Judge. For perjury, the punishment is a four-inch nail piercing the tongue. For breaking Law 65, the punishment is suffocation. The Judge releases a very interesting demon from the book and a character is wrapped in pages of skin much the same way that the Robert De Niro character in Terry Gilliam's film ***BRAZIL*** got wrapped in blowing newspapers. And that's just the overture. ***[GB; VOL. 3, NO. 12] SUBTITLED VHS FROM U.S. MANGA CORPS; 50 MINS.; US$29.95.***

**MEGAZONE 23, PART ONE**

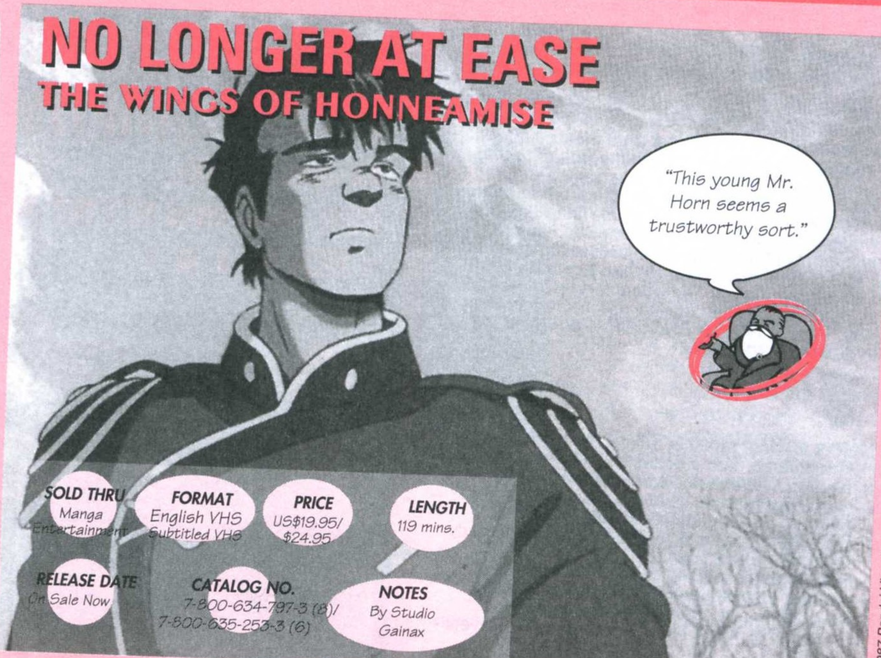
To people who had caught ***ROBOTECH***, it had a familiar look, sharing character and mecha designers with ***ROBOTECH***'s first segment, ***MACROSS***. But you realized quickly that ***MEGAZONE*** took elements of ***MACROSS***: the hot-headed young hero who inadvertently comes to pilot a transforming weapon, the idol singer who rallies her people in a time of war, the staff officer whose superiors don't believe the true nature of the threat, and gave them a darker, cynical twist. ***MEGAZONE***'s backdrop wasn't the future, but contemporary Tokyo; it involved people of our age in our time, but we aren't those people anymore. ***[CGH; VOL. 3, NO. 10] ENGLISH VHS FROM STREAMLINE PICTURES; 80 MINS.; US$29.98.***

**METAL FIGHTERS MIKU VOL 1**

Some years ago, canny promoters managed to make women's wrestling phenomenally popular in Japan (even though it's never been much more than a sideshow in the U.S.), pitching it to a young female audience that worshipped its heroines like idol singers. ***METAL FIGHTERS MIKU*** is about women wrestlers of the future who fight in powered armor (which might answer a not-so-obvious question: what if the Knight Sabers had gone into wrestling?). Miku is the appealing heroine. She's an earnest Everygirl who is part of the Pretty Four, an inexperienced four-woman tag team fighting for the honor of a small and struggling wrestling promotion in what looks like a near-endless inter-league championship tournament. ***METAL FIGHTERS MIKU*** is cute and frothy, fun and unpretentious, and really rather well done for what it is. If your brain has an idle setting, you might enjoy the ride too. ***[DD; VOL. 3, NO. 12] SUBTITLED VHS FROM SOFTWARE SCULPTORS; 90 MINS.; US$24.95.***

# NO LONGER AT EASE

## THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE


"This young Mr. Horn seems a trustworthy sort."

**SOLD THRU**
Manga Entertainment

**FORMAT**
English VHS
Subtitled VHS

**PRICE**
US$19.95/
$24.95

**LENGTH**
119 mins.

**RELEASE DATE**
On Sale Now

**CATALOG NO.**
7-800-634-797-3 (8)/
7-800-635-253-3 (6)

**NOTES**
By Studio Gainax

© 1987 Bandai Visual

A long-suffering partisan of ***THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE*** (and its co-producer), Bandai Visual's Shigeru Watanabe, was recently asked why, in his opinion, American fans—who have voted ***HONNEAMISE*** their top anime film in the last three annual `rec.arts.anime` polls—seemed to hold it in so much higher regard than those in Japan, where it proved profitable only seven and one-half years after its release. It's not an easily answered question; Mr. Watanabe could only opine that American anime fans are on the average older, and therefore, presumably, more open to sophisticated material.

A number of American fan observers of anime, such as Gerald Leung and Emru Townsend, have written at length on the complex subtleties of ***HONNEAMISE***—its modes of expression, ethical presentation, and symbolic structure. But merely examining the superficial aspects of the film indicate reasonable grounds for the film's status: its unmatched level of art direction that created an entire imaginary world down to the smallest detail, the boldness of its concept, the association many American fans feel with ***HONNEAMISE*** 's "Generation X" protagonists, and of course, the association the fans feel with Gainax, the studio of *otaku*-turned-pro who created the film.

Gainax associated itself strongly with ***HONNEAMISE***; the film's tiny "Royal Space Force," ridiculed by a society that doesn't believe in space travel, is a metaphor for studio Gainax itself, the band apart in a society that doesn't take anime seriously. When the protagonist, Shiro, is the surprise volunteer to be the first man in space, he must overcome the considerable doubts of his own friends, reflecting the anime industry's own lack of ambition.

The story of the film is *how* the first man goes into space, with all the ensuing technical, political, and ultimately *moral* questions Shiro must face on the road to the rocket; the question of whether he can mature gets linked to whether mankind in general can grow up and *both* questions are contained within that poised by Gainax in making ***HONNEAMISE***: Can *anime* grow up?

Those who are encountering ***HONNEAMISE*** for the first time are advised that while the English dub contains certain merits—its (generally) good casting and superior voice direction helps to bring out qualities subtitles can obscure, such as the film's humor—the script for the dub contains a number of changes from that of the subtitled version that alter Yamaga's narrative intent. Some are relatively minor (three references to economic conditions in society) whereas some—such as Leiqunni now blaming herself for a notorious incident in the film—brought contempt from many film critics during its U.S. tour and chagrin from those fans in the audience who, unlike the critics, knew the original dialogue.

Most serious, perhaps, are quite deliberate changes made in Shiro's moral assessment of himself in the bazzar scene and in his closing monologue which tip the delicate secular/religious balance of the original (the spiritual aspects of ***HONNEAMISE*** have come in for criticism even among fans; yet Shiro merely prays—in the anime version of ***NAUSICAÄ***, the heroine dies for the sins of humanity and is resurrected to fulfill a prophecy!) into the latter camp, another change that produced negative critical attention.

The final scenes of the film, where Leiqunni is the only one in the crowd to notice the change, seem unintentionally prophetic of ***HONNEAMISE***'s legacy, for the film, like Shiro, changed history forever—the history of anime as a medium, which grew up so much in its 119 minutes—yet it was a change unacknowledged by so many. Yamaga, speaking of world history, once observed that the price one pays for progress is sometimes a very personal and painful one, but could as well have been speaking of the price he and Gainax would pay for ***HONNEAMISE***. "But we must pay it," said Yamaga, "or things will never be better than they are." ***HONNEAMISE*** is not an easy film for many people to like, yet it earned respect because it puts you no longer at ease. That is a hard gift to accept, but it is perhaps the greatest one.

**Carl Gustav Horn**

### OGRE SLAYER

!#&@

In his interpretation of Ogre Slayer, Jason Gray-Stanford ("Joe Higashi," ***FATAL FURY***) sounds a lot like a young Clint Eastwood. In the manga, the Ogre Slayer is a cold, angry creature who is obsessed with the idea of becoming human. The video presents him as a tarnished knight, much like Eastwood's "Man With No Name." Even though the second tale is not as intriguing as the first, it still has enough suspense and visceral excitement to keep the average horror fan happy. For all its unflinching gore, the ***OGRE SLAYER*** video succeeds in bringing to life Kusunoki's moody manga. The characters have depth and the stories address fascinating, psychological dilemmas. ***[MO; VOL. 3, NO. 12] ENGLISH VHS FROM VIZ VIDEO; 60 MINS.; US$24.95.***

### PATLABOR 2

***PATLABOR 2*** is that rarest of anime: the adult drama; beautifully animated, with a fantastic yet believable plot to destabilize the Japanese government in the near future. It isn't necessary to have the seen the first ***PATLABOR*** film in order to understand ***PATLABOR 2***—background material is helpfully "re-capped" in the early part of the movie, which opens in 1999 with a Japanese/U.N. peacekeeping mission somewhere in Southeast Asia, inspired by Japan's real-life mission to Cambodia in 1991. Like the hunt for the renegade Colonel in ***APOCALYPSE NOW***, the subsequent investigation reveals the truth about a war whose nature the people of Japan are not willing to face. ***PATLABOR 2*** is easily the most political anime film ever made—a beautiful film to watch. ***[CGH; VOL. 4, NO. 1] ENGLISH VHS/SUBTITLED VHS FROM MANGA ENTERTAINMENT; 108 MINS.; US$19.95/$24.95.***

### PRINCESS MINERVA

Princess Minerva is seventeen years old and the only daughter of Wisler XII of the Wisler Kingdom. The place isn't exactly the hub of the universe, so Minerva's exploits are limited to rearranging the local scenery with ancient magic experiments, making life difficult for her lady-in-waiting, Blue Morris, and generally being selfish. But a mysterious and powerful sorceress by the name of Dynastar is dead-set on making the life difficult for Wisler XII and his daughter. While not on the same level as ***DRAGON HALF***'s stomach-gripping insanity, ***PRINCESS MINERVA*** has enough gags, not to mention a somewhat better animation quality, to keep the viewer happy. ***[TT; VOL. 3, NO. 12] SUBTITLED VHS FROM A.D. VISION; 45 MINS.; US$34.95.***

### SAMURAI SHODOWN

As an anime fan I was a little let down by ***SAMURAI SHODOWN***, and as a fan of the *game* I was let down even more. The quality of the animation was a little less than what I had expected, and the story as a whole just didn't interest me as much as I had hoped it would. It didn't live up to the expectations I had created after hours of playing and thinking "Man, I wish there was a really cool ***SAMURAI SHODOWN*** anime out there. I can just *imagine* it." On another note, this is the first video-game-to-anime translation I've seen which is *less* violent than the game itself. Kinda makes you think, doesn't it? ***[KF; VOL. 3, NO. 12] ENGLISH VHS FROM A.D. VISION; 80 MINS.; US$29.95.***

### SOHRYUDEN: LEGEND OF THE DRAGON KINGS, VOLS. 1 & 2

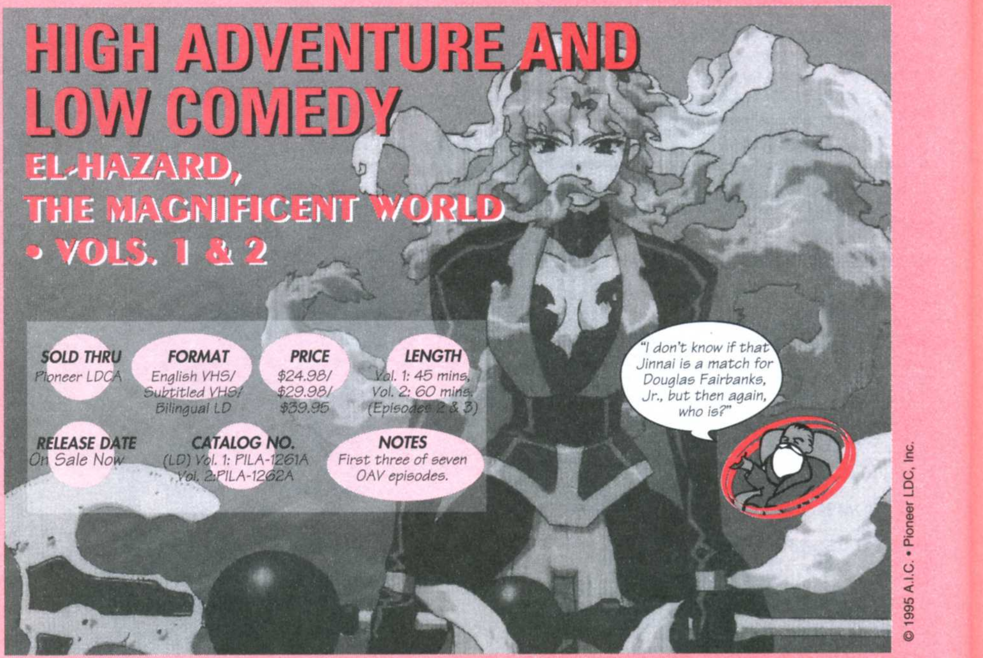
With its mix of politics, criminals and the supernatural, ***SOHRYUDEN*** resembles popular manga like ***CRYING FREEMAN*** and ***MAI THE PSYCHIC GIRL***. The lightweight narration and the overly romanticized presentation of the four brothers add *shôjo* elements to the videos. Throw in dragons, Chinese history, military assaults, people being fed to goldfish and you have what could be a very interesting series. Unfortunately, ***SOHRYUDEN***'s creators spend too much time portraying the mundane aspects of the brothers' lives at the expense of plot development. Every episode is pretty much like the next. ***SOHRYUDEN*** is a very frustrating series to watch because it could be so much better. ***[MO; VOL. 3, NO. 12] SUBTITLED VHS FROM U.S. MANGA CORPS; 97 MINS.; US$29.95.***

### TOKYO BABYLON

Based on the popular manga series by Studio Clamp,

# HIGH ADVENTURE AND LOW COMEDY

## EL-HAZARD, THE MAGNIFICENT WORLD • VOLS. 1 & 2


"I don't know if that Jinnai is a match for Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., but then again, who is?"

| SOLD THRU | FORMAT | PRICE | LENGTH |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pioneer LDCA | English VHS/<br>Subtitled VHS/<br>Bilingual LD | $24.98/<br>$29.98/<br>$39.95 | Vol. 1: 45 mins,<br>Vol. 2: 60 mins.<br>(Episodes 2 & 3) |

| RELEASE DATE | CATALOG NO. | NOTES |
|---|---|---|
| On Sale Now | (LD) Vol. 1: PILA-1261A<br>Vol. 2:PILA-1262A | First three of seven OAV episodes. |

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The basic plot of ***EL-HAZARD*** has just celebrated its centennial. That is, it comes straight out of Anthony Hope's novel ***THE PRISONER OF ZENDA***, first published in 1894, where an Englishman visiting an imaginary country just happens to be an exact double of the local king and is pressed into service impersonating said royal type to avert a political catastrophe. The novel was tremendously popular and inspired a flood of imitators that continues to this day, both of the specific royal impersonation plot and of the general theme of intrigue in a non-existent land where royal pomp and circumstance still mean something. In 1912, with the credibility of ficticious European countries nobody ever heard of wearing thin, Tarzan-creator Edgar Rice Burroughs was inspired to move the whole thing off-planet in ***A PRINCESS OF MARS***. There, the author was free to fill in the map with all the bogus kingdoms he wanted, and that in turn spawned a new line of imitators.

And so we come to ***EL-HAZARD***, whose creators freely acknowledge their debut to both Hope and Burroughs. Three contemporary Japanese high school students and their teacher are transported to a fabulous other-dimensional world for high adventure and low comedy. The twist that ***EL-HAZARD*** gives the bewhiskered ***ZENDA*** plot is making the hero take the place of a missing prin*cess* he happens to resemble. Having to pass himself off as a girl is surely an indiginity no manly Burroughs hero ever had to endure (although according to myth, as macho a personage as the Norse god Thor once pulled it off). The crossdressing jokes fly thick and fast, and in general, ***EL-HAZARD*** is shot through with sexual innuendo that would have given Victorian and Edwardian authors heart attacks. For instance, this being the 1990s instead of the 1890s, one of the major characters is the missing princess' lesbian lover.

Unlike previous versions of the ***ZENDA*** plot, which concentrated on the daring hero's adventures, ***EL-HAZARD*** is more of an ensemble story. Makoto is the hero, of course, and it's his slight build and rather pretty features that put him in the missing princess' wardrobe. It has also been made clear that he wasn't sent to the world of El-Hazard by accident, though the reasons remain obscure as yet. However Makoto is just one of the group, and the other characters get a substantial amount of time on screen. Makoto arrives on El-Hazard with his teacher, Mr. Fujisawa, a chain-smoking near-alcoholic. The good news for Fujisawa is that he has gained super-strength as a result of his translation to El-Hazard. The bad news is that he's super-strong only as long as he's sober. Then there's Jinnai, Makoto's morally challenged classmate, a conniving psycho who hates Makoto with homicidal intensity. If you or I suddenly and uexpectedly found ourselves on a strange planet, we'd be a while adjusting to it, but Jinnai only takes advantage of the new opportunities and in short order becomes warleader of the Bugrom, an insectoid army threatening the human civilization on El-Hazard. Between the advance of the Bugrom army and Machiavellian scheming within the royal house itself, Makoto's long-term chances for survival even as a princess don't look entirely good, but with each episode he finds new friends and allies. *Lots* of friends and allies; the supporting cast is ballooning faster than ***TENCHI MUYÔ!***'s. If there seems to be some family resemblance between ***EL-HAZARD*** and ***TENCHI MUYÔ!*** (one rather wimpy male lead character somewhat at sea amid a horde of women, some the them downright crazy), it could be because ***EL-HAZARD***'s director Hiroki Hayashi also directed the first six-episode arc of the ***TENCHI MUYÔ!*** OAV series.

As Burroughs established the tradition for this sort of fantasy, the background details of the alien world created out of the author's imagination are half of the charm. Rather than being created from scratch however, El-Hazard's background has a Middle Eastern motif, giving it the look of an ***ARABIAN NIGHTS*** fantasy rather than science fiction. Still, there are some inventive touches, such as a cat that can flatten itself against the owner's chest and double as body armor.

***EL-HAZARD*** is a colorful, energetic, amiable series. It's a little heavy on the lowbrow comedy, perhaps (what Burroughs hero ever squirmed through a state function in desperate need of a bathroom?) and some of the English voice-work, in particular Fujisawa's, is just a bit overbearing. But even with its heavy silliness ratio, it's an enjoyable retread of an ancient plot, and I'm looking forward to seeing how it's all resolved in the final episode. Or am I? I have a guess as to why Makoto resembles the missing princess even though he's of the masculine persuasion (ever read L. Frank Baum's ***LAND OF OZ***?), and if it turns out I'm wrong, I'll be paying off a sizeable bet.

*Dwight R. Decker*

**TOKYO BABYLON** blends the supernatural with modern-day sensibilities in ways that feel both striking and new. A séance performed at the scene of a motorcycle accident, runes scrawled in lipstick on a hospital floor, spirit wards stuck to skyscraper walls—these images build on each other, heightening the eerie atmosphere of the story and lingering with the viewer long after. Unfortunately, the climactic battle between Subaru and the villain felt both rushed and forced, and the villain's sudden manifestation of amazing supernatural power lacked explanation. ***[JM, VOL. 3; NO. 9] SUBTITLED VHS FROM U.S. MANGA CORPS.; 52 MINS.; US$29.95.***

### WINDARIA

Previously released by Harmony Gold in limited numbers, ***WINDARIA*** is distinguished from Harmony Gold's ***ONCE UPON A TIME*** by the reinsertion of a missing "nude" scene (because there's no dialogue, no additional voice re-recording was necessary, making both versions identical except for the missing scene). This is not a simple film where good triumphs over evil. Rather, ***WINDARIA*** is a complicated tale of conflicting loyalties and hard lessons to achieve enlightenment. While there is very brief nudity and some violence, this film has a lot to teach older children about life. I don't hesitate to recommend this one as suitable for family viewing. ***[GB; VOL. 3, NO. 7] ENGLISH VHS FROM STREAMLINE PICTURES (DISTRIBUTED BY BEST FILM & VIDEO); 95 MINS.; US$19.95.***

### YOU'RE UNDER ARREST! • VOL. 1, "AND SO THEY MET"

AnimEigo's always been first-and-foremost a subtitling outfit, and their English dubs never seemed their strong point. But ***YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!*** is 100% there—the actors are going for the gusto, and the main girls' voices don't have that annoying, high-pitched, airheaded, drugged-out sound that too many people seem to think approximates what Japanese girls sound like. The lead character even sounds like a *VALLEY GIRL* and *I LOVE IT*! It's not gritty drama by any means, but it's got car chases, likeable characters and outrageous stunts. [***YUA*** *qualifies for an honorary "Mondo Mecha" icon for the snazzy cars—Ed.*] ***[MS; VOL. 3, NO. 10] ENGLISH VHS FROM ANIMEIGO; 25 MINS.; US$14.95.***

### ZEGUY • PARTS 1 & 2

Miki, the plucky heroine of ***ZEGUY***, is a good role-model for young schoolgirls, being neither a whining crybaby like ***ICZER-ONE***'s Nagisa nor an "I-spit-on-your-grave" ingenue like ***LEGEND OF THE OVERFIEND***'s Megumi. Writer/director Shigenori Kageyama fills ***ZEGUY*** with an interesting variety of alternate and alien technology, such as flying boats powered by living magnets and dragon-headed fireworks cannons, and it seems something of a shame that the animation production staff had only the typically low OAV budget to develop their many ideas. Still, odds are you'll find ***ZEGUY***'s imagination and charm worth the money. ***[CGH; VOL. 3, NO. 6] SUBTITLED VHS FROM U.S. MANGA CORPS; 79 MINS.; US$24.95.***

### ZENKI, VOL. 1

Like ***DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO***, young sorceress Chiaki must protect the Earth from a growing tide of evil. As in ***TENCHI MUYÔ!***, she inadvertently releases a trapped demon from a family shrine. Her relationship to Zenki (the demon) is not dissimilar to that of ***VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU***'s relationship with her companion, Larva. Even Zenki's destructive/constructive nature is reminiscent of ***DEVILMAN***. But what saves ***ZENKI*** from being just another cookie-cutter comedy series is Chiaki's personality. She's not as sickly sweet as most teenage heroines. One minute she may be running from Zenki's all-powerful persona, the next she's slapping around his obnoxious alter ego. Zenki is the perfect foil for such antics. We enjoy seeing him humbled because he's so rotten the rest of the time. ***[MO, VOL. 4, NO. 1] SUBTITLED VHS FROM SOFTWARE SCULPTORS; 90 MINS.; US$24.95.***

REVIEWERS: *[GB]* **Greg Barr**; *[CGH]* **Carl Gustav Horn**; *[MS]* **Mitch Samuels**; *[AK]* **Angeline Kim**; *[MO]* **Michael O'Connell**; *[DD]* **Dwight Decker**; *[GL]* **Greg Lincoln**; *[TT]* **Ted Thomas**; *[KF]* **Kit Fox**.

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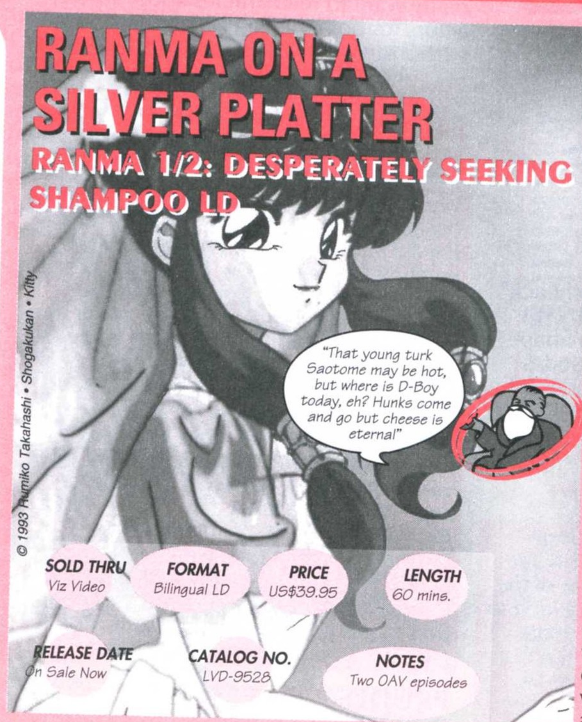
# RANMA ON A SILVER PLATTER

## RANMA 1/2: DESPERATELY SEEKING SHAMPOO LD


"That young turk Saotome may be hot, but where is D-Boy today, eh? Hunks come and go but cheese is eternal"

© 1993 Rumiko Takahashi • Shogakukan • Kitty

| SOLD THRU | FORMAT | PRICE | LENGTH | RELEASE DATE | CATALOG NO. | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Viz Video | Bilingual LD | US$39.95 | 60 mins. | On Sale Now | LVD-9528 | Two OAV episodes |

I remember when Viz released the VHS version of this program. It was only the second ***RANMA 1/2*** tape to come out, following the first volume of the TV episodes. The OAVs were current, and had been made after 160-odd ***RANMA 1/2*** episodes and two theatrical films had already appeared in Japan. Delightful as the OAVs were, there was clearly a mass of prior history viewers were expected to know. I knew the very basic situation from the TV tape: Ranma was a Japanese boy who had fallen afoul of an arcane Chinese curse and now changed into a girl when he got wet, and he and his father had moved in with a family friend (one of whose three daughters Ranma is in theory engaged to). But the OAVs were filled with a multitude of unfamiliar characters who had come alone later (like, who's this guy who turns into a *duck*!?). I could figure things out from context, but it could be a little puzzling at times.

Two years and nearly two dozen tapes later, things are quite a bit clearer. Most of the major characters have now been officially introduced in the TV episodes and the character relationships have been established (as well as what some people turn into when they get wet). As a result, watching the program now is even more enjoyable than it was two years ago.

The two episodes on the disc are: "Curse of the Contrary Jewel," where Shampoo inadvertently acquires a magical jewel that when worn the wrong way, reverses her normal feelings of alarmingly intense affection for Ranma. The sudden and inexplicable rejection rankles Ranma's ego to the point that he tries to win her love back even though he doesn't really want it (It's a guy thing, see?), but Shampoo's great-grandmother views the situation as an opportunity to corner him into marrying the purple-haired beauty. There are several twists and turns in the plot, the most delicious coming when Akane wears the jewel in a position that makes her express her *true* feelings for Ranma. We kind of knew what they were from the start, all those episodes ago, but it's nice to have her on record.

In the second episode, "Tendo Family Christmas Scramble," the entire cast, including a number of characters yet to be seen in America, gathers at the Tendo Dojo for a Christmas party. The result is lots of set-piece party gags, a karaoke song by the major female cast members, and a surprisingly tender conclusion. Okay, they're goofy cartoon characters in implausible situations. But they're *alive* in their own way with personalities all their own. I came away from this episode with a warm feeling, as if I had really been at a party with a lot of good friends.

I'm enough of a ***RANMA***-holic and a laser disc-o-maniac that I had already bought just about all of the OAVs on Japanese import discs, and in comparison, the Viz disc is a bargain. In Japan, the OAVs are packaged one to a one-sided CAV disc, which at this writing will cost you about US$45.00 apiece in Tokyo or US$60.00 from an importer. ("CAV" by the way, is laser disc jargon for the relatively uncommon disc format that allows special effects like rock-steady freeze frame.) Unlike the import discs, Viz's disc offers two soundtracks (Japanese dialogue on the digital track, English on the analog), with closed-captioned English subtitles. A few signs have "hard" subtitles that are unturn-offable, and the program's even been improved slightly by the addition of a caption that wasn't on the VHS, explaining the inscription on a bust of the school principal. The sound quality on the English analog track is a bit below that of the digital track, but although disappointing, this shouldn't be a showstopper for most people. Otherwise, both camps of anime fans—the hardcore purists who consider all English dubbing to be an abomination and the folks who hate to have to "read" a movie—should be happy.

Better picture, digital sound, bilingual sountracks, freeze-frame capability, chapter stops—the American release of ***RANMA 1/2*** has never looked better. I can only hope this is only the first of a series of ***RANMA 1/2*** laser disc releases.

*Dwight R. Decker*

Get Connected!

## HOW TO ORDER

*All of the videos reviewed this month are available directly from their U.S. production companies. Please note that in most cases orders made with personal checks are shipped when checks clear; MC/Visa is the simplest way to pay. In the meantime, be sure to tell them ANIMERICA sent you!*

***LEGEND OF LEMNEAR***
*Call 1.800.626.4277 for toll-free ordering information , or write to:* ***U.S. MANGA CORPS • 250 WEST 57TH STREET, SUITE 317 • NEW YORK, NY 10107.***

***EL-HAZARD or THE HAKKENDEN***
*Call 1.800.801.3472 for toll-free ordering information, or write to* ***PIONEER LASER DISC FAN CLUB • 1058 E. 230rd STREET • CARSON, CA 90745*** *or call Viz Shop-By-Mail at 1.800.394.3042, or write to:* ***VIZ SHOP-BY-MAIL • P.O. BOX 77010 • SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107.***

***THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE***
*Most ME releases can be ordered directly from The Right Stuf or Viz Shop-By-Mail. For a catalog call 1.800.338.6827 (US$1.00) or 1.800.394.3042 (free), or write to* ***THE RIGHT STUF • P.O. BOX 71309 • DES MOINES, IA 50325****, or* ***VIZ SHOP-BY-MAIL • P.O. BOX 77010 • SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107.***

***RANMA 1/2: DESPERATELY SEEKING SHAMPOO LD***
*Call 1.800.394.3042 for toll-free ordering information, or write to:* ***VIZ SHOP-BY-MAIL • P.O. BOX 77010 • SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107.***

Letters from Our Readers

# ANIMESSAGES

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### DOIN' THE TIME WARP

**Q:** Why does Akane have that "flashback" to the "skating episodes" in the ***RANMA 1/2*** video series, when they haven't happened yet? Also, why do those episodes appear out of order in the video series, as compared to the manga?

Sincerely,

**Many confused *RANMA 1/2* viewers**

**A:** *The episodes were animated out of order. The animators, faced with low ratings and the imminent cancellation of the original* ***RANMA 1/2*** *TV series, decided to skip ahead in the storyline and animate the introduction of Shampoo for their last few episodes. When a second* ***RANMA 1/2*** *series began to air, the skipped-over story of "The Golden Pair" were the first episodes animated. But since the original series still contained, within the "Shampoo" episodes, a flashback to the skating storyline (which hadn't occurred yet in the video series), fan confusion continues to this day.*

### DOUBLE IDENTITY

**Dear ANIMERICA,**

I really enjoyed the article "**Talkin' Tenchi Muyô!**" I hadn't seen the anime then, but have since gotten three episodes. It is now one of my faves. One thing I noticed, though, was that the names you gave in your article were not the names listed in the credits. The only exception was "Tenchi"—you had M.K. Miller and the credits said Kermit Miller. The others were totally different and I'm really wondering why?

Sincerely,

**Grace Houser**

*The interviews for the* ***TENCHI MUYÔ!*** *voice-actors were arranged for us by the good folks at Pioneer LDCA, so they're the actual actors of the series all right. But being actors, they also have stage names. If you want to join the Screen Actor's Guild and someone else is already using your name, you're required to change it—which is why we get stars with names like "Michael J. Fox" and so forth. Likewise, "Kermit" Miller vs. "M.K." Miller.*

### MORE ON VOICE-ACTORS

**Dear Trish,**

*Konnichi wa!* Congratulations to you and your ANIMERICA staff! I really like your "Sound Bites" that feature interviews of the voice-actors for the English versions of anime. I hope you will include some little bio-data on each voice-actor (and more pictures of them in action!). I suggest that you include in your "Sound Bites" section interviews and features of these voice-actors for the original Japanese versions also. Surely, some readers of ANIMERICA really want to read articles about voice-actors for both the English and Japanese versions.

Yours,

**John Jasper Guce**
**Makati City, Philippines**

*We began our new "Sound Bites" section because so many readers wrote to us asking for information on English-speaking voice-actors—and now it's rapidly becoming one of our most popular features. Since almost nothing is known about most of the actors working in English-language anime, it's really been interesting to hear what they have to say about voice-acting in general, and working on anime projects specifically. Look for more interviews in future issues, such as our upcoming interview with Cathy Weseluck ("Shampoo" and "Azusa"* ***RANMA 1/2****, "C-Ko"* ***PROJECT A-KO****). As far as interviewing Japanese voice-actors, well, we've done it before with our interview with girl-type Ranma's Japanese voice-actor and popular pop singer Megumi Hayashibara (Vol. 1, No. 10), so maybe we'll do it again!*

### PRUDES AND PREJUDICE

**Dear Trish,**

I am becoming more and more annoyed (and angered) with adult anime classification and America's rating system in general. I know this is an age-old topic, but it really peeves me to find people under eighteen, like myself, missing out on some of the kewlest shows available just because they show some skin. What's worse is that *huge* amounts of pure violence are passed off without a second thought, completely unrestricted. A perfect example of this unrealism is the ***DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO*** series. Every one of the ***YOHKO*** movies is rated "Over 18," meaning others like myself have to get them through another method. It also seems insane to me that something such as ***GENOCYBER*** (which is so ultraviolently gory it's almost sickening) can be purchased by minors without difficulty, yet something such as ***YOHKO 2 & 3***, which shows about a minute of nudity (collectively) is banned from all but eighteen-year-olds. It makes me wonder how long I'm going to keep missing these excellent shows due to America's intense fear of the female body.

Sincerely,

**Jason Bossenberry**
**Pender Island, B.C., Canada**
*RECEIVED VIA INTERNET*

*As far as "ratings" systems go, America currently does not really have a "ratings" system for anime releases—at least not in the same way that live-action movies do. Legislation in the U.S. makes distributing a product that could be considered "obscene" to local standards across state or international borders a crime, which explains why videos with "adult content" often appear with cautionary text, or some other kind of "rating" applied by the distributor. But videos in Japan also have a "rating" of sorts, mostly applied for explicit sexual content. As far as America's unique perspective on sex and violence is concerned, it's something even the distributors of live-action films which contain explicit sex take seriously—a not-so-uncommon practice is to show one version in the U.S. and another in Europe—while the violence of films such as* ***PULP FICTION*** *or* ***TERMINATOR 2*** *is not seen as a problem. What this says about the American culture is the subject of many a literary thesis, but it's safe to say you'll only have to wait until you're eighteen for any "ratings system" to cease to be a problem.*

### IS ANYBODY LISTENING?

**Hello,**

I am writing to ask a favor…like most of your writers! I have been, on my Readers' Poll card, for the past few months (okay, maybe six or so) saying that you should run an interview with Yukito Kishiro. Well, much to my chagrin, I ran across a review of ***BATTLE ANGEL ALITA*** that mentioned an article in ANIMERICA Vol. 1, No. 8 called "The thoroughly postmodern manga of Yukito Kishiro." Here's where you come in. I seem to be having trouble locating a copy of this particular issue. If you know where I might locate either a copy of the issue or the article itself, I would greatly appreciate it!

I also wanted to pass on a little story. A few months ago, I attempted to contact Ken Iyadomi, the Executive Vice President of Manga Entertainment, Inc. You see, I am a professional actor in the midwest (yes, we do exist) and am quite interested in anime voice-acting. So I wrote Mr. Iyadomi for some friendly advice regarding the business of anime. Well, to make a long story short…he never responded. Now, you may think I am being petty. The truth is, I wasn't really expecting a reply regarding my questions; however, I did have some very kind words for Manga Entertainment and became very disheartened to never hear a response from the man who said "We do care about fans, and believe that mass-market success is always based upon your help." (ANIMERICA Vol. 3, No. 2.)

Mr. Iyadomi…If you do care about your fans, it might help if you took a moment to respond to those who take the time to thank you for your work (and maybe give a little helpful advice now and then!).

Peace,

**Jack Wallen**
**Indianapolis, IN**

*It's a sad fact of life that not every letter can be answered personally—there just isn't time, no matter what your devotion to fandom may be, once you start getting as many letters as we do, or Manga Entertainment does, on a regular basis. So don't feel snubbed if you don't get a personal response—everyone's doing what they can to do justice to the anime and manga you want to see, and believe us—that's a full-time job. As for your other question, you can still get your hands on all of the classic back issues of ANIMERICA (except for the sold out Vol. 1, No. 1) and* *read our exclusive interviews with Masamune Shirow, Hayao Miyazaki and Rumiko Takahashi. Check out our neat new Web site at* `http://www.viz.com` *or call the friendly Viz Shop-By-Mail staff at 800.394.3042 for a free catalog.*

## ANIME GENERATION GAP

**Dear Trish and Co.,**

I greatly enjoyed reading the article "Anime: Then and Now," in Vol. 3, No. 12. It brought a smile to my face, and memories—running home as fast as I could after school to watch ***STAR BLAZERS***; taping and watching ***ROBOTECH*** over and over again; finding an nth-generation tape of ***MACROSS: DO YOU REMEMBER LOVE?*** and puzzling over the Japanese names; the surprising revelation that ***ROBOTECH*** was really three series; and reading about ***AKIRA*** in the city newspaper.

Anime fandom has a rich history in the U.S. Even now, a new generation of anime fans is being born in the U.S. While I find it rather humorously surprising that ***SAILOR MOON*** seems to be joining ***STAR BLAZERS***, ***ASTRO BOY*** and ***ROBOTECH*** in the realm of U.S. anime "classics," I find it even more surprising that fresh-faced ***SAILOR MOON*** fans don't even *recognize* ***ROBOTECH***, much less ***STAR BLAZERS***. It makes me wonder: will there be an anime generation gap? It'll be interesting to find out. At any rate, it's good to see anime back on television.

So…when can we expect to see ***RANMA 1/2*** on television?

Take it easy,

**Michael Toole**
**Boston, MA**

## THAT ONE THING THAT TIES US ALL TOGETHER

**Dear Trish,**

*A true story…*

If it's one thing I found that's constant in the life of an otaku, it's "once an otaku, always an otaku." Being in the military, you're thankful for a place to rest and relax (R&R); for the military, that place is the USO (United Serviceman's Organization). It's a place where GI Joes or Janes like myself and their families go to play and relax. They also help out the families during deployments and crises. It's also a place for a good "hard pipe hittin' otaku" like me to go and enjoy a microwaved burrito and good manga.

So on one day I have off, I'm sitting here in the USO at Jacksonville, North Carolina, surrounded by marines and their dependents, just munching on a burrito and enjoying some original Japanese manga. On this particular day I hoped to be reading ***RANMA 1/2*** and ***MARMALADE BOY***. Now I know what you're thinking. What's a 22-year-old navy hospital corpsman doing reading *shôjo*? Hey! Back off! I defend this country's freedom, so it's my god-given right! Ok!?! Besides, Miki's a babe! Well, anyway…

In the conference room next to me is the weekly meeting of International Military Wives' Association, where wives from different countries go and meet and do stuff. Well, I don't give it much thought. I got my burrito and I got my ***MARMALADE BOY*** manga—I'm in seventh heaven, when all of a sudden I hear "*Mah-mah-le-dô Boy?*" I turn and see standing over me a pretty Japanese girl. Probably not even 18. The kid probably got married to a marine and was brought over to the States. I ask her if she likes manga. She only understood manga. Her eyes lit up as she flipped through ***RANMA 1/2***. From the look on her face, I could tell she loved this stuff from when she was little, and I knew for a fact she couldn't find any here (I know—I've looked. I got this manga in Maryland). So I did the only thing I could do. I reached into my knapsack and pulled out two ***MARMALADE BOY*** and ***RANMA 1/2*** manga. I handed them to her and gave her a look that said, "*Go on kid, keep it. You need it more than I.*" I've been homesick myself and could relate.

"*Arigato Gozaimasu!*" she sang as she ran to her meeting. I sat back and finished my burrito and thought, "*Thank God I'm an otaku.*"

In a world where people worlds apart have only one thing in common, it's still that one thing that can tie us together. I know she's reading her manga over and over (but sorry kid, the ***SAILOR MOON*** manga is mine).

**Pablo "Doc" Fraga**
**U.S. Navy**
**Jacksonville, NC**

### ANIMERICA GAFFE SQUAD!

Our "Nice Try" department this month is filled by anyone who wrote in about the missing address on "one of your ads" in Vol. 3, No. 12. Sorry, but no, it doesn't qualify for a prize. They're not "our" ads folks, they belong to the people whose names are on 'em. We've let the company know about the problem—in the meantime, the missing address/phone number for **Image Trading Company is: 68-05 Fresh Meadow Lane, Flushing, NY • 11365 • (718) 358-3823**.

This month's top prize winner is **Gina Marie Gallego** of **Foster City, CA** who was the first to write in about ***SAILOR MOON***'s hunky video arcade heartthrob being incorrectly identified as "Anthony" instead of the correct name, "Andrew." Well, we've got no excuse for this one. While feverishly checking our sources to make sure that the characters' English names were spelled correctly [*Reference source:* ***MEET SAILOR MOON***, *published by Kodansha U.S.A, S.R.P. $4.95 at your local bookseller—Ed.*], we unfortunately skipped right over the more obvious goof. *D'oh*! We swear by our ***SAILOR MOON*** lockets that we'll never do it again. Another prize goes to **Whitney Nakayama** of **Torrance, CA** for pointing out the spot where our fingers got stuck on the repeat key in "Japan's Manga Top Ten," which incorrectly lists "3x3 EYES" as the Japanese text for entries 8-10…again, and again, and again. For their sharp eyes and quick response, our latest squadders win the latest issue of MANGA VIZION, North America's *only* monthly manga anthology magazine. See you next time on the ANIMERICA Gaffe Squad, and remember, a little sweetness goes a long way. Bye!

*Spot a boo-boo in the latest issue of ANIMERICA? Don't waste time wringing your hands in confusion, tell us about it! If you spot a legitimate factual error somewhere in the magazine (not counting typos or "style" questions such as "Takahashi Rumiko" instead of "Rumiko Takahashi"), and you're the* ***FIRST*** *person to send in a regular-sized postcard about it, you'll join the ANIMERICA Gaffe Squad, entitling you to a special prize! Send postcards to:* ***ANIMERICA Gaffe Squad****, c/o Viz Communications, Inc. • P.O. Box 77010 • San Francisco, CA 94107.*

### WINNERS, WINNERS, WE'VE GOT WINNERS!

Three lucky **ANIMERICA** readers have been selected from all completed reader response polls postmarked during **December '95** to receive a special prize. Here they are:

***Reggie Allen • Lubbock, TX***
***Gina Gallego • Foster City, CA***
***Vicky Lee • Honolulu, HI***

Congratulations! All three of you win a copy of ***"TOUGH COOKIES,"*** the latest hilarious volume in the ***RANMA 1/2 ANYTHING-GOES MARTIAL ARTS*** series! If your name wasn't picked this time, don't worry, because we'll be randomly drawing a whole new batch of winners each and every issue, so be sure to send in your readers' response card without delay. Good luck, Animericans!

ANIMERICA welcomes letters from its readers. Address correspondence to: ***Letters to the Editor, c/o Viz Communications • P.O. Box 77010 • San Francisco, CA 94107***, *or via the Internet to viz@netcom.com. We are unable to answer letters individually. Concise, typed letters have the best chance of being published. We reserve the right to edit for space or clarity.*

**Steve Pearl's**

## ANIME CONVENTION CALENDAR

When writing cons, always include a SASE to ensure a response. Please remember that con information can change rapidly, especially as the con dates move closer. Cons which don't have many guests listed usually confirm them closer to the con, so keep that in mind when scheduling your con season itinerary. All conventions are interested in making their event the best they can, so feel free to write them with suggestions and comments.

*Steve Pearl*

### MARCH 1996

#### FANIME CON '96 • 2 MARCH

***LOCATION:*** *Foothill College • Los Altos Hills, CA.* ***GUESTS:*** *Allen Hastings, Carl Horn, Fred Schodt.* ***MEMBERSHIP RATES:*** *US$6.00 for advance registration, US$8.00 at the door.* ***ADDRESS:*** *FANIME CON '96 • P.O. Box 642028 San Jose, CA • 95164-2028* ***E-MAIL:*** *abunai@ibm.net.*

#### KATSUCON NI • 8-10 MARCH

***LOCATION:*** *Holiday Inn Executive Center • Virginia Beach, VA.* ***GUESTS:*** *Masakazu Katsura, Steve Bennett, Robert DeJesus, Ben Dunn, Tim Eldred, Steve Kyte, Bruce Lewis, Michael Ling, Helen McCarthy, John Ott, Fred Perry, Toren Smith.* ***MEMBERSHIP RATES:*** *$35 until 23 February, 1996, $40 at the Door. 10% discount available to groups of 10 or more who pre-register together before 23 February.* ***HOTEL PRICES:*** *$60.00/room/night (flat rate). Call 1.804.499.4400 or 1.800.HOLIDAY (please mention Katsucon when making reservations).* ***ADDRESS:*** *Katsu Productions • P.O. Box 11584, Blacksburg, Virginia 24062-1582.* ***E-MAIL:*** *katsucon@vtserf.cc.vt.edu.* ***WEB PAGE:*** *http://elfie.bevc.blacksburg.va.us/katsucon/katsuni.html.*

### APRIL 1996

#### ICON XV: AMERICA'S THIRD LARGEST SF • FANTASY • MULTIMEDIA CONVENTION • 12-14 APRIL

***LOCATION:*** *SUNY at Stonybrook Campus, Long Island, NY.* ***GUESTS:*** *TBA.* ***MEMBERSHIP RATES:*** *TBA.* ***HOTEL PRICES:*** *TBA.* ***ADDRESS:*** *I-Con XIV • PO Box 550 • Stony Brook, NY 11790.* ***CALL:*** *(516) 632-6045.* ***E-MAIL:*** *ccheng@ic.sunysb.edu.*

### MAY 1996

#### PROJECT A-KON 7 • 31 MAY-JUNE 2

***LOCATION:*** *Harvey Addison Hotel • Dallas, TX.* ***GUESTS:*** *Mitsuhisa Ishikawa, Toshihiko Nishikubo, Steve Bennett, Ben Dunn, Scott Frazier, Miyako Graham, Neil Nadelman, Joel Orbeta, Rosarik Rikki, White Radish, Elin Winkler, Tavisha Wolfgarth, Robert Woodhead.* ***MEMBERSHIP RATES:*** *US$30.00 pre-registered after 15 January, 1996.* ***HOTEL PRICES:*** *$74 a night (including tax) for 1-4 people* ***ADDRESS:*** *Project: A-Kon, 3352 Broadway, Suite 470 • Garland, TX 75043.* ***CALL:*** *214.278.6850.* ***FAX:*** *214.278.6935.* ***E-MAIL:*** *Phoenix@cyberramp.net.* ***WEB PAGE:*** *http://www.cyber.ramp.net/~phoenix/akon.*

### JUNE 1996

#### ANIME EXPO '96 • 28 JUNE-30 JUNE

***LOCATION:*** *Anaheim Marriot and Convention Center • Anaheim, CA.* ***GUESTS:*** *Hiroyuki Kitazume, others TBA.* ***MEMBERSHIP RATES:*** *US$35.00 until 15 April, $40 until 1 June, $45 at the door.* ***HOTEL PRICES:*** *$79 per room/night (Single to Quad)* ***ADDRESS:*** *Anime Expo, 2425 B Channing, Suite 684 • Berkeley, CA 94704.* ***CALL:*** *310.268.8454.* ***E-MAIL:*** *info@anime-expo.org.* ***WEB PAGE:*** *http://www.tcp.com/~prisoner/ax.html.*

### AUGUST 1996

#### OTAKON 1996 • 9 AUGUST-11 AUGUST

***LOCATION:*** *Hunt Valley Inn • Baltimore, Maryland.* ***GUESTS:*** *Robert DeJesus, Adam Warren.* ***MEMBERSHIP RATES:*** *TBA.* ***HOTEL PRICES:*** *TBA.*

ANIMERICA READERS'

# ANIME NATION

SPECIAL ARTICLES, FEATURES, TIPS AND IDEAS FROM **YOU**, THE ANIMERICA READERS!

CORNER

CONTRIBUTOR

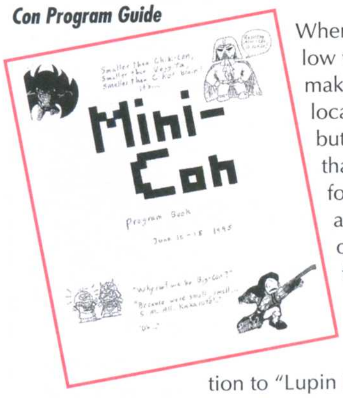
## MINI-CON '95

*Even with all of the new anime conventions popping up all over the place, what do you when do the five months between KatsuCon and Anime America just seem to last forever? What's a die-hard anime fan to do?* ***Rob Lantz*** *was faced with just this problem so he did what any partially sane otaku would do—he hosted* ***Mini-Con '95*** *out of his home! Our on-the-spot correspondent* ***Chad Diederichs*** *gives you the scoop on the littlest convention in the nation.*

I was skeptical at first, but in the end I figured "What the hell." I headed up to Claverick, New York with my fellow Maryland otaku on the weekend of 16 June through 18 June, 1995. I was definitely not prepared for what Mr. Lantz had in store for us. After we all registered (yes, we had a registration table and membership badges!), we eagerly awaited the arrival of the other Mini-Con attendees. Overall, there were about eight people who attended Mini-Con (nine if you count Rob's roommate's father who dropped by periodically and wondered "What the @#%! is going on?"). After we all took turns riding on Rob's motorcycle, it was time for opening ceremonies, which featured a hysterical battle between Captain Harlock and Darth Vader's galactic empires.

We had two video rooms, one of which hosted 24-hour Super Nintendo and Sega CD fighting games. On Saturday, we took part in the *Tenka-chi Budôkai* video fighting game tournament and Anime Jeopardy (you'd think that after my score reached -300 I'd remember to phrase my answers in the form of questions!).

**Con Program Guide**


Smaller than Chibi-con,
Smaller than Vegeta,
Smaller than C-Kun's brain!
It's...
Mini-Con
Program Book
June 16-18 1995
"Why can't we be Big-Con?"
"Because we're small, small, small... S.M.ALL. Kakarotto!"
"Uh..."

When supplies ran low we decided to make a run to the local grocery store, but we realized that it was time for the masquerade, so we put on our costumes for the grocery run. You can imagine the public's reaction to "Lupin III," "Minky Momo," "Son Gohan" (complete with monkey tail), an AD Police officer in full combat armor, and "The Great Saiyaman" walking into the grocery store. I saw more than one mother trying to get her children as far away from us as possible when I performed The Great Saiyaman's *sentai* dance in the snack aisle.

Sunday brought the closing ceremonies and so Mini-Con '95 was officially concluded. Now I can't wait to see what's in store for Mini-Con '96! Just remember, when the non-convention season is getting you down, take after Rob Lantz and throw your own con. How hard could it be?

**Chad Diederichs**

## SING A SONNET OF RANMA "WE HATE AKANE ANTHEM" (To the tune of "Wild Like You")

*Yappa paa, yappa paa*
*Akane's such a dope*
*Ranma, do what is right*
*Don't you dare elope.*
*Yappa paa, yappa paa*
*She's not worth it at all*
*Ranma, go dump her now*
*Time to make your call.*

*Before her, boys actually had taste*
*Ranma, Ranma,*
*there's no time to waste*
*Beat her up, send her straight to h—*
*Ranma, go for it,*
*c'mon go for it*
*Get rid of her,*
*then your life will be so swell.*

*Somebody,*
*tell him,*
*why it's so hard*
*To say those 3 words—"I hate you"?*
*Before you know it, he may like her*
*Oh my gosh! Jerk times two!*
*Should've left while he was ahead*
*That's much better than being dead*
*Better than having that brat up his butt*
*Ranma, go ahead, call her a *!@?*
*You'll be better off without her*
*But just tonight—forget it!*
*Perhaps tomorrow—Forget it!*

*Shampoo, Kodachi, or Ukyo*
*Ranma, Ranma, they're better, don'tcha know*
*Let Ryoga take her as his bride*
*Should've warned him though*
*Guess he'll never know*
*Akane and Ranma*
*What a big fat lie!!*

***Jamie E. Godley***

## ODE TO RANMA 1/2 "THE WORLD ACCORDING TO RANMA 1/2"

Who says you can't have things both ways?
Well, sit back and let Ranma have his say.
He becomes a girl when doused with water cold,
but becomes himself with hot water, so I'm told.

What is that? It looks like a giant panda!
No fear, just pour hot water on him, and becomes Genma.
Guess Ranma found a way to get in Genma's hair,
splash him with cold water, and he's a giant panda bear.

We have Kasumi, the oldest of the Tendo three,
and of her two other sisters? Well, let's see. . .
There's middle sis Nabiki, who's never short on luck,
she'll try anything and everything to make a buck.

Baby sister Akane, with boards and bricks as her toys,
one thing's for certain. . .she certainly hates boys!
The chosen one to be Ranma's future bride,
but one taste of her cooking, and he's in for a ride!

Then there's Ryoga, the navigationally challenged young man.
Pour cold water on him, and he becomes the little black pig, P-Chan.
His arrogance and cockiness makes Ryoga one to abhor,
but when he becomes P-Chan, he's the one girls love to adore.

Who's the girl with the long, flowing hair of blue?
Why, it's none other than the Chinese Amazon herself, Shampoo.
She's a hard fighting martial artist, give her that,
but douse her with cold water, and she becomes a cat.

Here is the lethally lovely Kodachi, also known as "The Black Rose,"
who'll put Akane out from under her nose.
But look out! Kodachi is Kuno's little sister,
don't mess with her, or feel Kuno's wrath, mister.

And Kuno? That philosophical and athletic Romeo,
there is one thing that he still doesn't know.
He wants the "pig-tailed girl" to play his love game,
does he know that she and Ranma are one and the same?

But who's that guy with the thick glasses on the loose?
Why, it's none other than the near-sighted warrior, Mousse.
Like Ranma and Ryoga and Shampoo, he also has a curse,
cold water makes him a duck, now what could be worse?

With charm, outrageousness, and witty style,
this group will guarantee to make you smile.
This is the world according to *RANMA 1/2*,
A joy to watch whenever you need a laugh.

**Carmen DiProspero**

### Terry Bogard Says,
## Make My Video! Challenge
### First-Prize Winner!
ANIMERICA SERIALIZED STORY
# FATAL FURY, "MEN OF LEGEND"
**By Albert Lik-Heng Lee**
**EXCLUSIVE TO ANIMERICA!**

Illustrations by Melissa "Mai" Uran
Fatal Fury © SNK • Fuji TV • NAS

## CHAPTER SEVEN, "FRIENDS AND ENEMIES"

### BATTLE AT LINDENBERG

Veralina Vladivostok was talking with her good friend, Samantha Strong, in the Lindenberg Bar when five tourists came in. Her friend noticed her intent look and noticed the newcomers as well…in particular, the tall man in the baseball cap. He seemed to be the only unattached one in the group. American. Had to be.

Veralina personally had her eye on the other, shorter and sleeker blond-haired version of the former man, but then noticed one of the oriental women holding onto his arm almost possessively, and decided against making a move.

*Nyet*, not yet.

Duck King was enjoying the view of the two foreign women who, like himself, had been drawn to this bar. He had been dancing on the wood-tiled excuse for a dance floor when he noticed the two women's attention wander over to the people that had just entered…and the blond man at the head of the group.

*Damn! How dare he get in on my action!* King thought to himself. Time to introduce him to the protocol.

He whistled to his gang, in Germany for a Neo-Nazi convention. Billy Kane, Big Bear and half of the room got up and moved towards the five newcomers.

"Uh-oh, looks like our jerk with the mohawk is making a move, Vera," whispered Samantha.

"*Da*, comrade. And we will make ours. Get ready," answered Veralina in a subdued tone.

"Hey you! Mr. Baseball! we don't serve those kind in here!"

"Now Herr King, deese people 'ave just comme 'ere to 'ave food und drink. Zat's aull," said the barkeep, trying unsuccessfully to diffuse the situation that was growing uglier by the moment. Duck King stared at him and the short man quailed, disappearing behind the bar. King turned to Terry Bogard and his friends.

"You and your friends are going to have to go to another bar!" King continued, his men shouting their agreement. At this moment, King picked up a full beer bottle and threw it at him.

Terry caught it neatly in mid-air, took a long draught and set it down on the nearest table.

Terry was tired. Terry was hungry.

Terry was severely ticked off.

But his anger burned cold as he locked gaze onto his opponent and answered, "No."

The finality of the tone set King off, and he came at Terry swinging. The fight was soon in earnest.

"C'mon Vera, let's help 'em out!" Samantha Strong shouted exuberantly as she got a Neo-Nazi into an arm-lock and propelled him against the wall with a thud.

"Finally we have excuse to 'dance' with these fascists, yes?" Veralina Vladivostok tripped another goon before finishing him with a stamp kick to the groin.

The two fought their way over to Terry and his group. "You need a hand, handsome?" Samantha grinned.

"Sure," Terry said without skipping a beat as he blocked a punch by a punk with a swastika tattooed on his forehead before knuckling him in the stomach. Together they wiped the floor with Duck King and his goons. The seven of them left together before the sirens came.

### A RESPITE FROM BATTLE

Terry, Andy, Mai, Five Flowers and Joe checked into the nearest hotel before joining Veralina and Samantha in a restaurant on the main lobby. The atmosphere of the establishment was a welcome change from the Lindenberg tavern where they had just met, and the five of them settled down to a meal that was long overdue as Vera and Samantha just watched, regretting that they'd already eaten. Their waiter was very good. He didn't even seem to notice their street clothes and had even made arrangements to change their juan, yen and U.S. currency into deutschemarks. Andy looked not the least bit uneasy seated between Mai and Veralina, while Joe and Five Flowers were enjoying each other's company.

Later that evening, feeling full and wanting to walk off their meal, Terry and Samantha left the group and were taking a stroll.

"Terry, what brought you here to Germany?" Samantha asked.

Terry stopped and looked at Samantha. She looked perfect by the moonlight and he was gauging just how much to tell her.

He decided he could trust her. "Samantha, have you ever heard of a man by the name of Geese Howard back home in the States?"

"Only that he is one of the richest men there and rumored to have Mafia connections, why?"

"He's here; here in Munich."

"What, how d'you kno…Terry, you're not thinking of going after him are you? He'll kill you!" The concern in Samantha's voice touched him.

He explained it all to her. How he had been separated from his brother Andy; their home in flames. The policeman explaining to him that their father was dead, probably at the hands of the one man who had been a family friend though it couldn't be proven. Being put into the orphanage and then running away to live like a street urchin and almost starving to death until he had been found, given clothes, shelter and food by a kindly Vietnam veteran who eked out an existence in the boxing ring.

Growing up and learning to fight; both on the streets and in the ring, coached, all this time, by his new surrogate father. Seeing the man beaten senseless and in a coma after winning a bout against a boxer by the name of Axel Hawk who had too many friends in the 'hood.

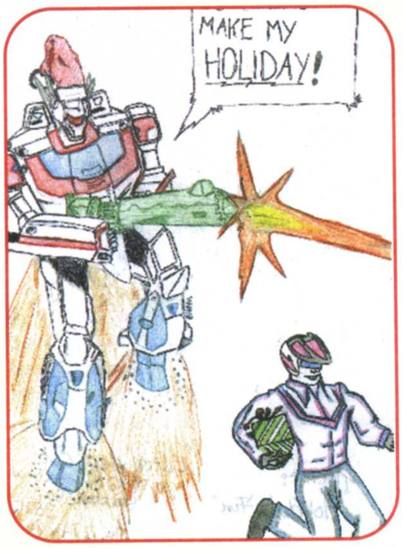
Running away from it all and becoming a drifter from city to city, before being "rediscovered" at the "King of Fighters" tournament in Detroit. Following the tournament around, wondering if the next match would be his last, ending up like his stepfather, or worse, his biological father. Ending up in China, of all places, with the touring tournament and being given sanctuary by Master Tung. Found by his brother and reunited, vowing vengeance on he who was responsible for his tortured existence, fighting and losing at first, but then winning. Like a lone wolf, roaming the concrete jungles of the world.

Samantha Strong listened as Terry talked well into the night, his eyes glinting in the moonlight and periodically sparking as he told of a fight he had won, or dulled at the retelling of a home he had lost. When he had finished, she drew close and, without a word, kissed him gently; the garden around them bathed silently in moonlight.

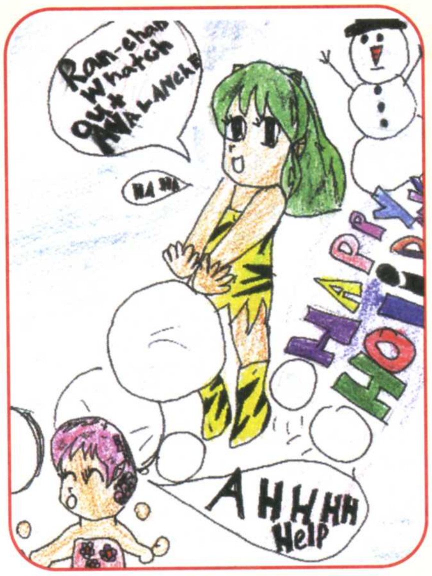
*BE HERE NEXT MONTH FOR THE NEXT EXCITING INSTALLMENT OF THE ANIMERICA SERIALIZED STORY—**FATAL FURY, "MEN OF LEGEND"**!*

# Animerica Fan Art Gallery

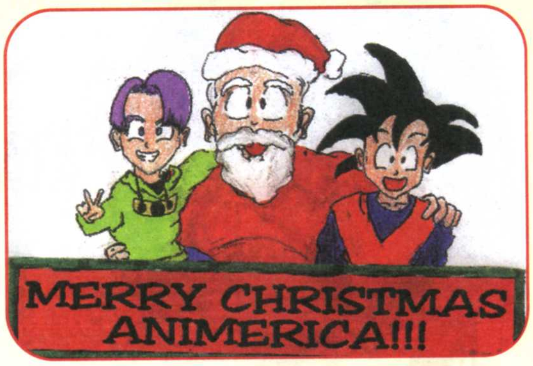
## HOLIDAY FUN


MAKE MY HOLIDAY!

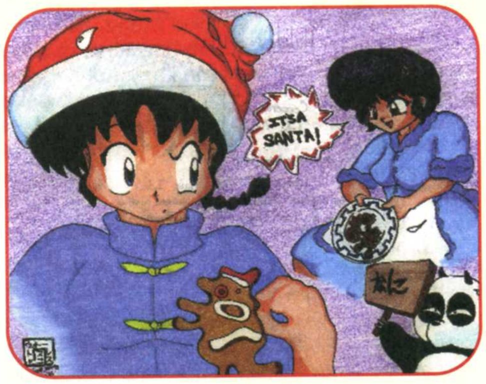
Eileen and Euell Lim • Stockton, CA • Ages 11 & 22


Ram-chan Whatch out AVALANCHE
HA HA
HAPPY HOLIDAYS
AHHHH Help

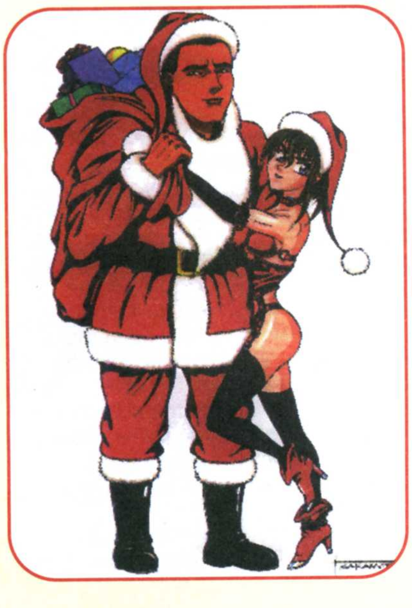
Jonathan Cohen • La Jolla, CA • Age 10


MERRY CHRISTMAS ANIMERICA!!!

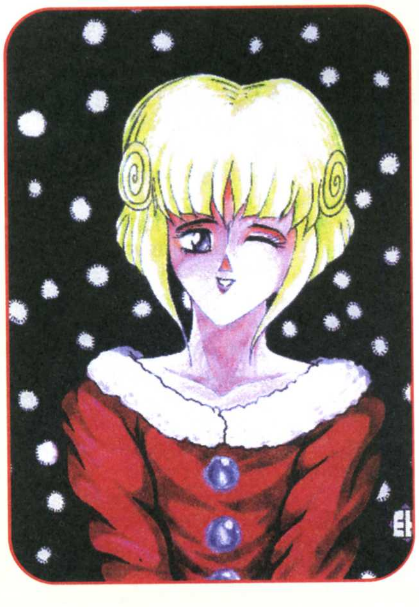
Carlo Alado • Fontana, CA • Age 19



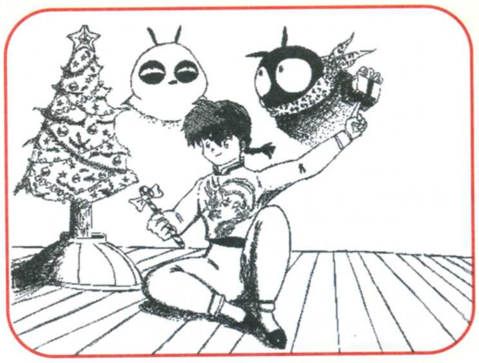
Scott Juarez • Copperas Cove, TX • Age 19



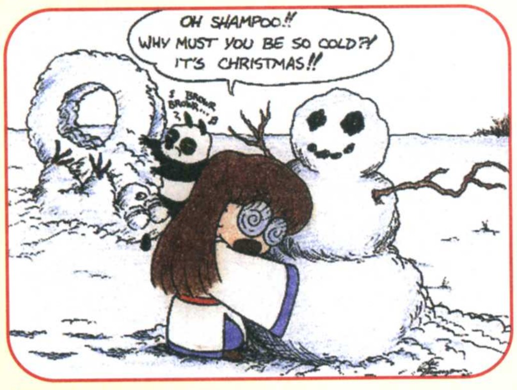
Kay Sakamoto • Loomis, CA • Age 35



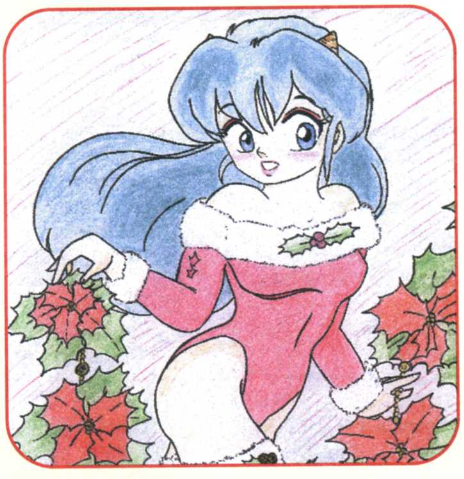
Evan Hayden • Monroe, MI • Age 15



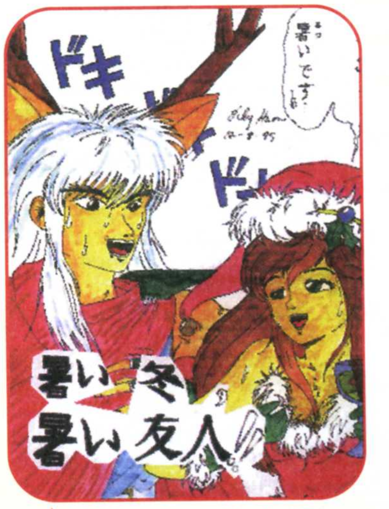
Jacobo Hernandez • Corregidora Sur, Mexico • Age 18


OH SHAMPOO!! WHY MUST YOU BE SO COLD?!! IT'S CHRISTMAS!!

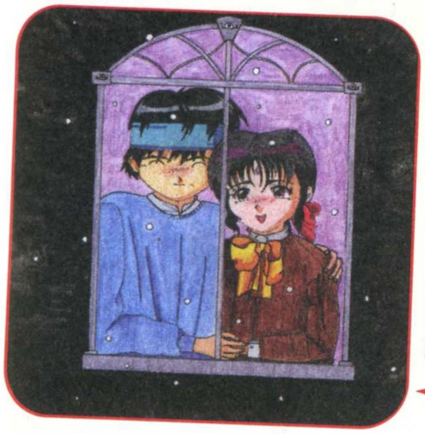
Lee Thompson • Bartlett, TN • Age ?



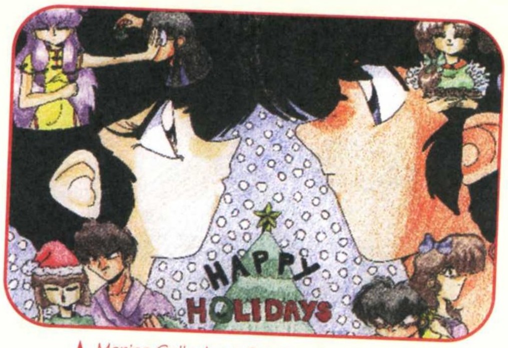
Aisha Al-Rumaithy • Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates• Age 18


ドキ ドキ
暑いです。
暑い冬 暑い友人!

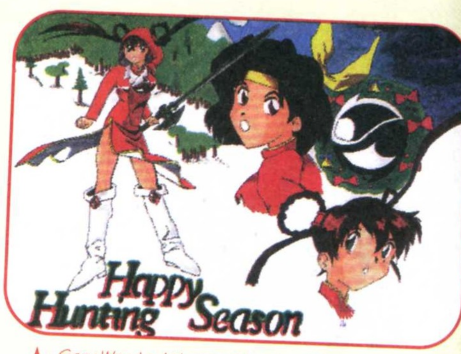
Lily Huon • Carson, CA • Age 15



Eilonwy Michael • Pleasant Hill, CA • Age ?

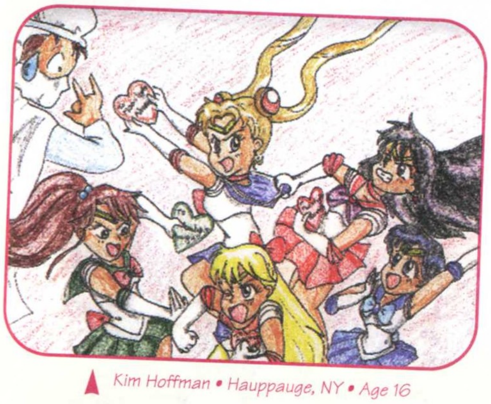

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Monica Gallagher • Sandy Spring, MD • Age 16

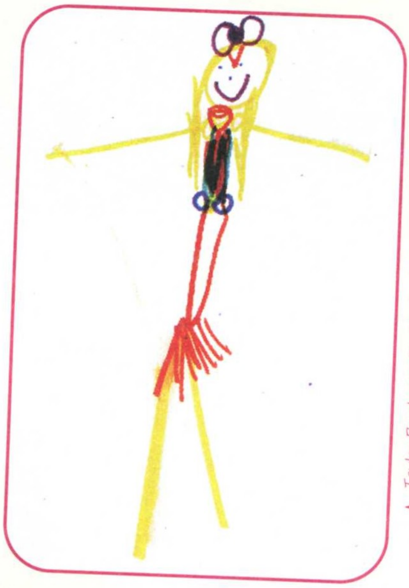

Happy Hunting Season

Gary Wood • Atlanta, GA • Age 16

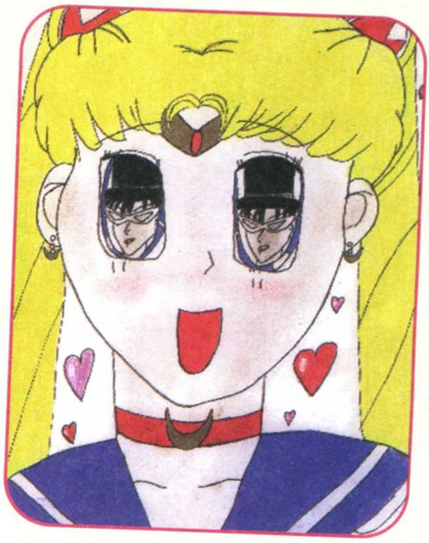
## BE MY VALENTINE



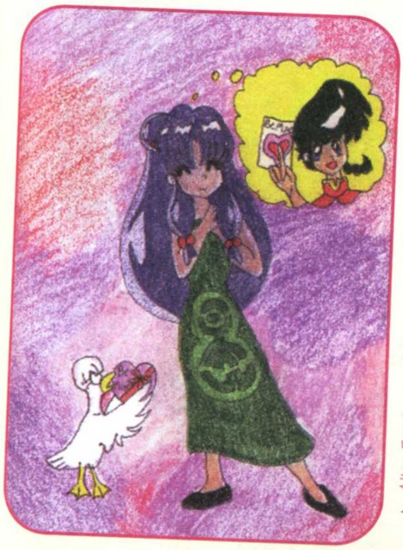
Kim Hoffman • Hauppauge, NY • Age 16



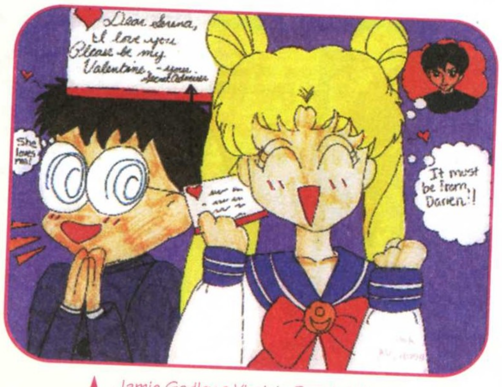
Taylor Brydges • Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada • Age 5



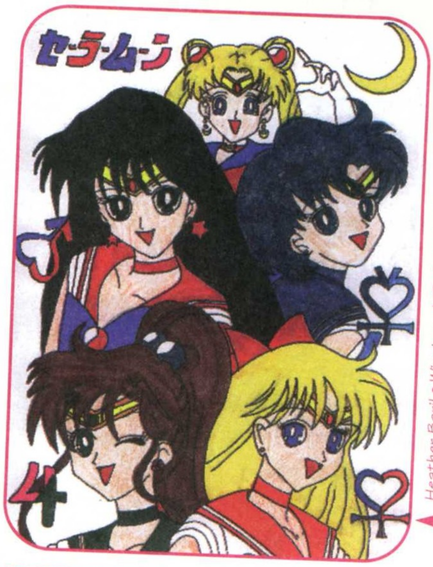
Meredith Cantoni • Dayton, NJ • Age 15



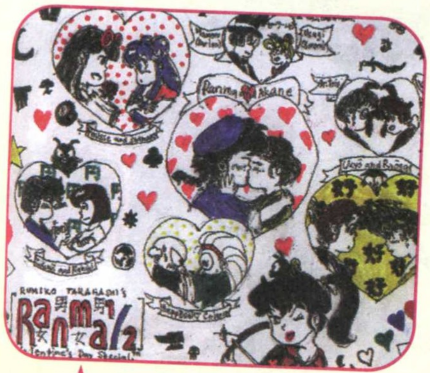
Alisa Farrington & Cheryl Farrington • Columbus, GA • Ages 13 & 9


Dear Serena,
I love you
Please be my Valentine. -your Secret Admirer
She loves me!
It must be from Darien!!

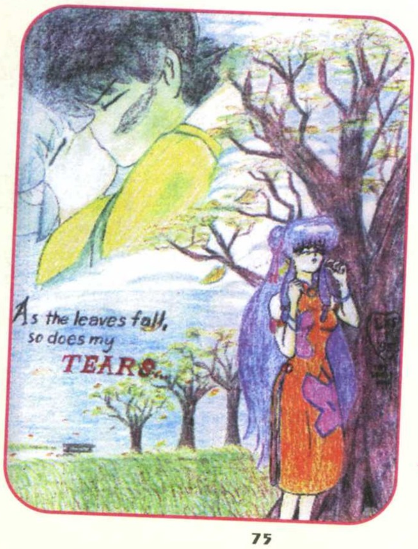
Jamie Godley • Virginia Beach, VA • Age 15



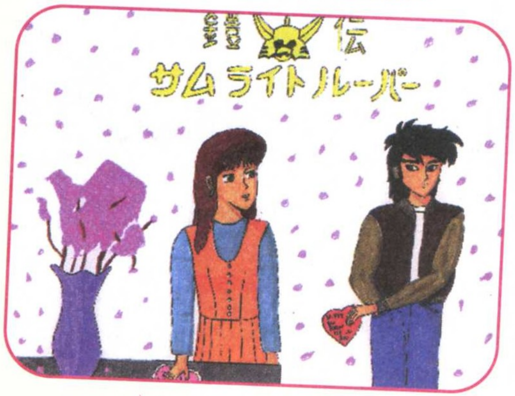
Heather Baril • Winnipeg, MB, Canada • Age 20


Ranma and Akane
Lloyd and Babes
Rumiko Takahashi's
Ranma 1/2
Valentine's Day Special

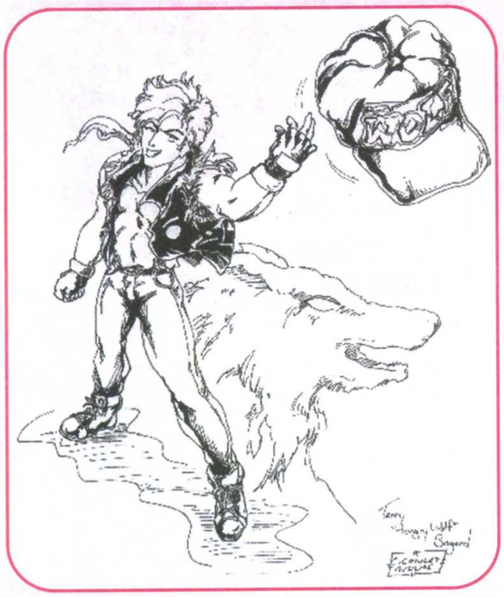
Lloyd B. Barrieses • Metro Manila, Philippines • Age 17


As the leaves fall,
so does my
TEARS..

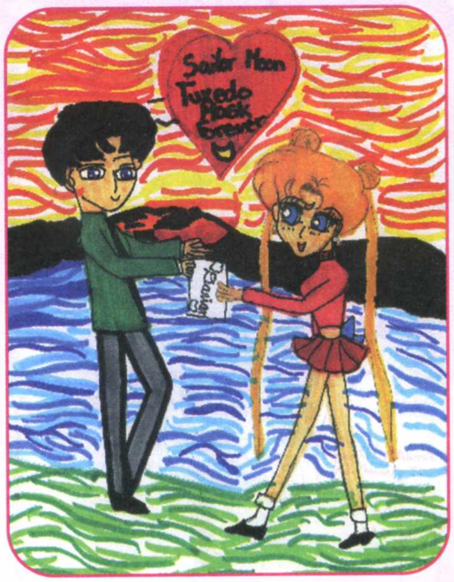
Elexis Cruz • Bulacan, Philippines • Age ?



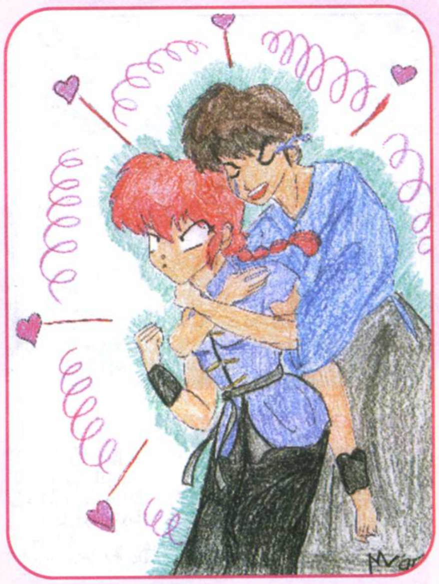
Dana Nguyen • Fremont, CA • Age 16



Chris Cowley • Markham, Ontario, Canada • Age 20



Jennifer Duong • Nanaimo, BC, Canada • Age 10

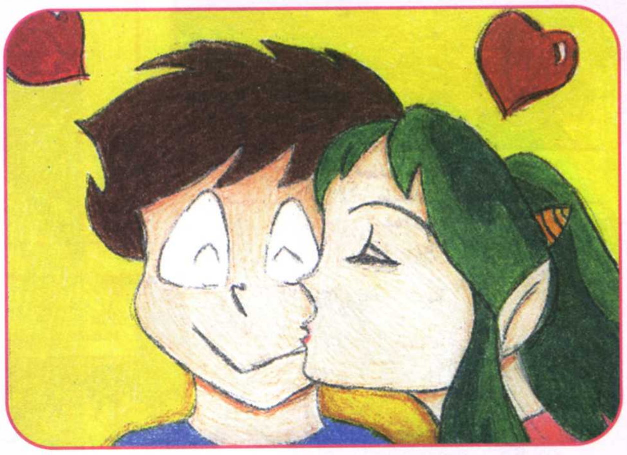


Meredith Lauer • Encinitas, CA • Age 13

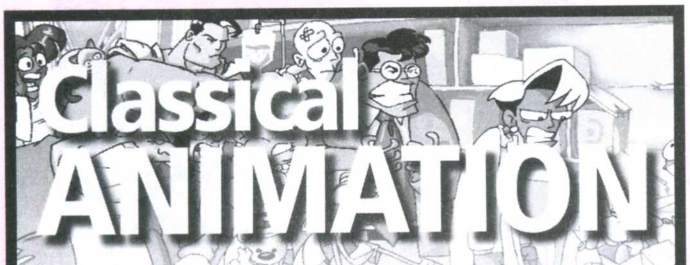
**FOR NEXT TIME...**

Thanks to everyone who sent in artwork to the ANIMERICA Fan Art Gallery! For next time, why not send in illustrations with **"A Nap in the Sun"** as your theme...?

As always, Art Director Yoshi and graphic designer Andrea ask that you don't use binder paper or pencil (color pencils are okay, but they don't reproduce nearly as well as pens and heavier paper stock do), and that you make your artwork **NO LARGER THAN** 8 1/2" x 11". Be sure to **CLEARLY LABEL** the back of your artwork with your **NAME, ADDRESS**, and **AGE**. Color illustrations are prefered to black and white, and while we're at it, **WRITE YOUR THEME** on the back of your artwork! (If you don't, we have to guess.) Please note that we are unable to return submissions unless special provisions are made well in advance. Be here for the fun next time on the ANIMERICA Fan Art Gallery!



Tracy Timmons-Gray • Saratoga Springs, NY • Age 17



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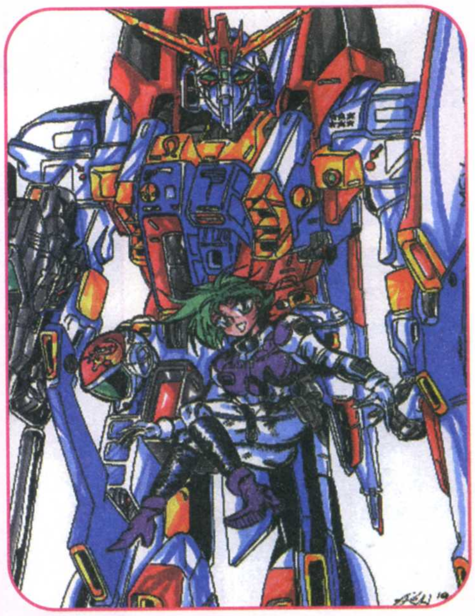

Eric Irie • Otterville, Ontario, Canada • Age ?

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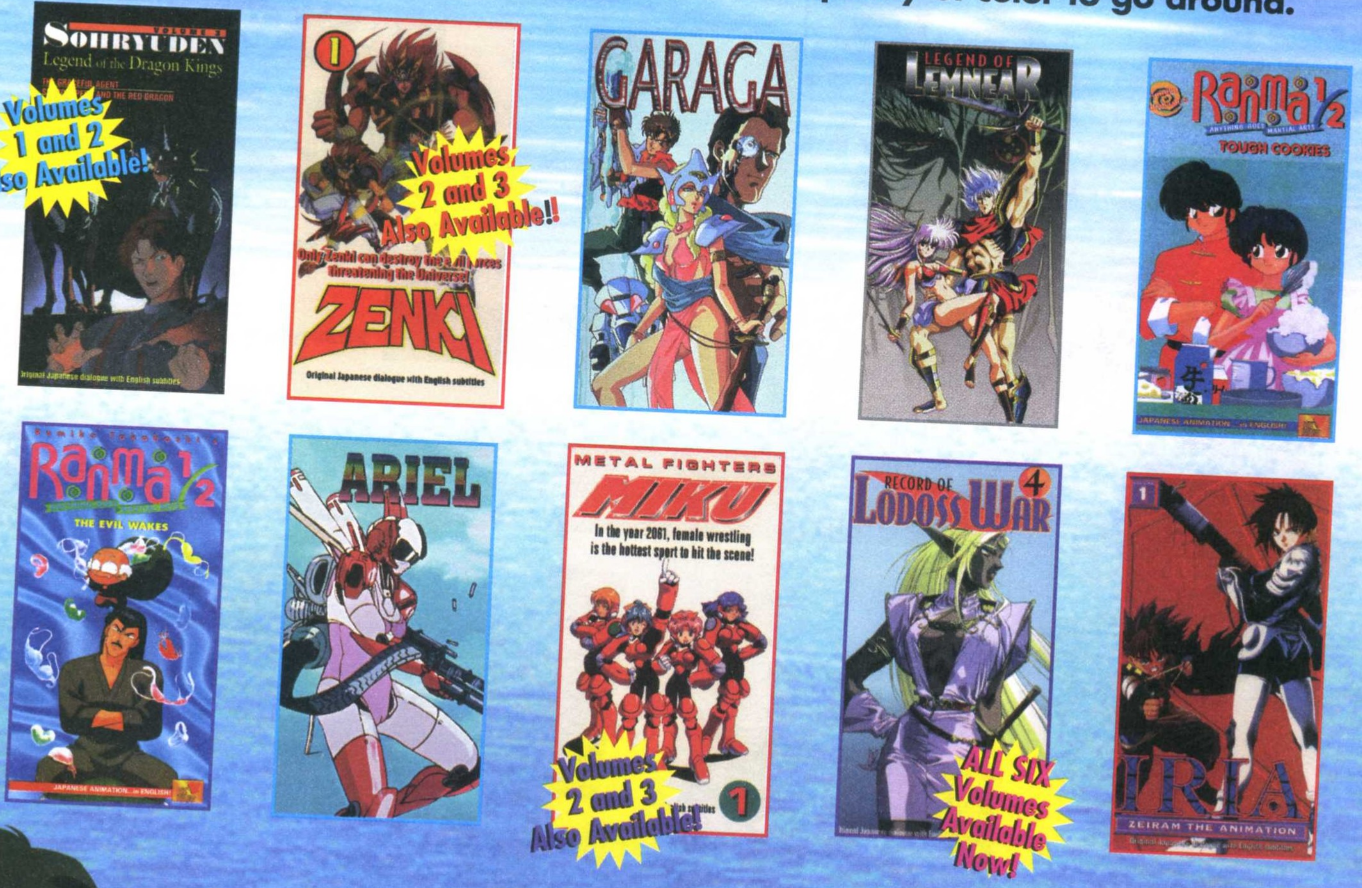
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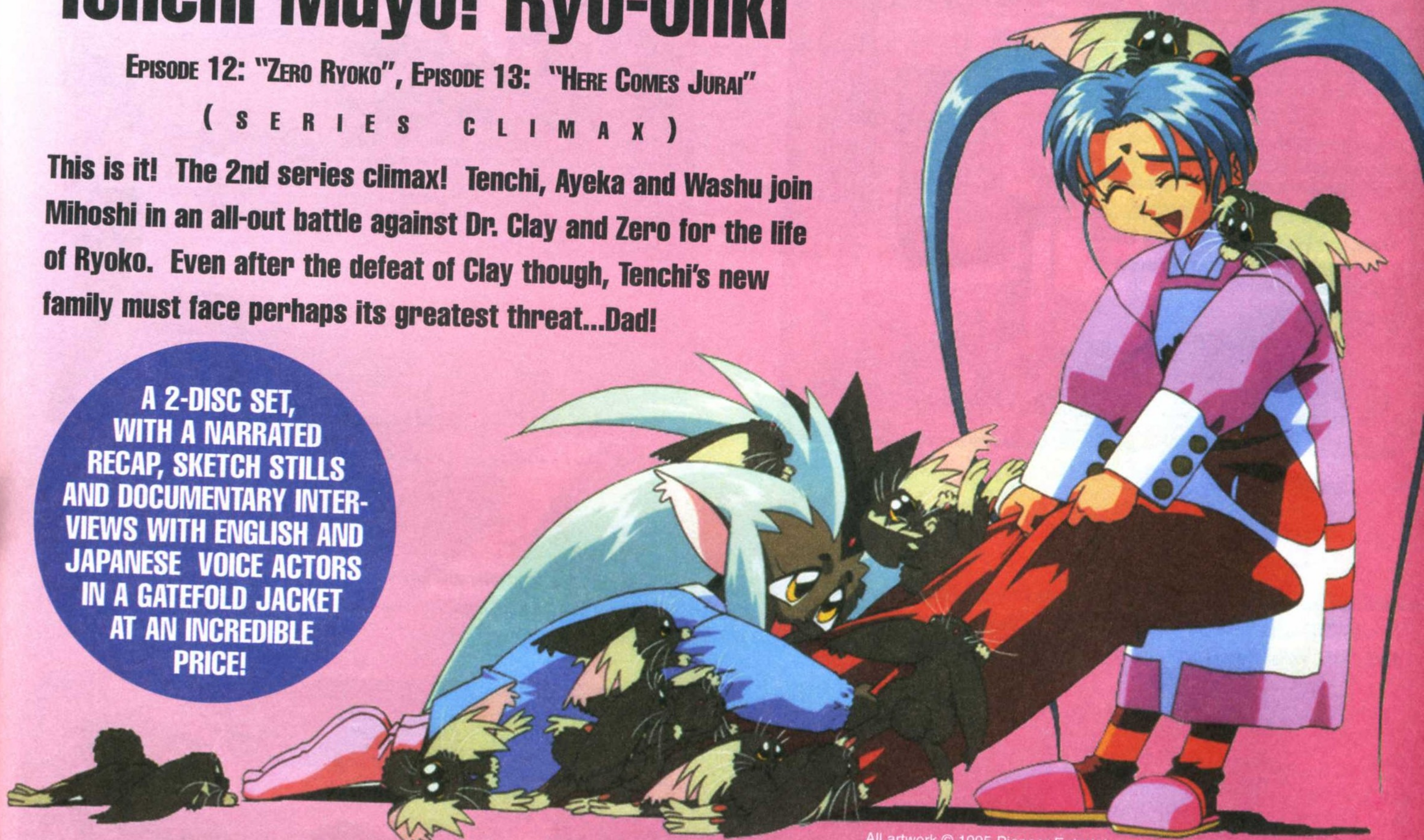

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**EL-HAZARD:**
**THE MYSTERIOUS WORLD**
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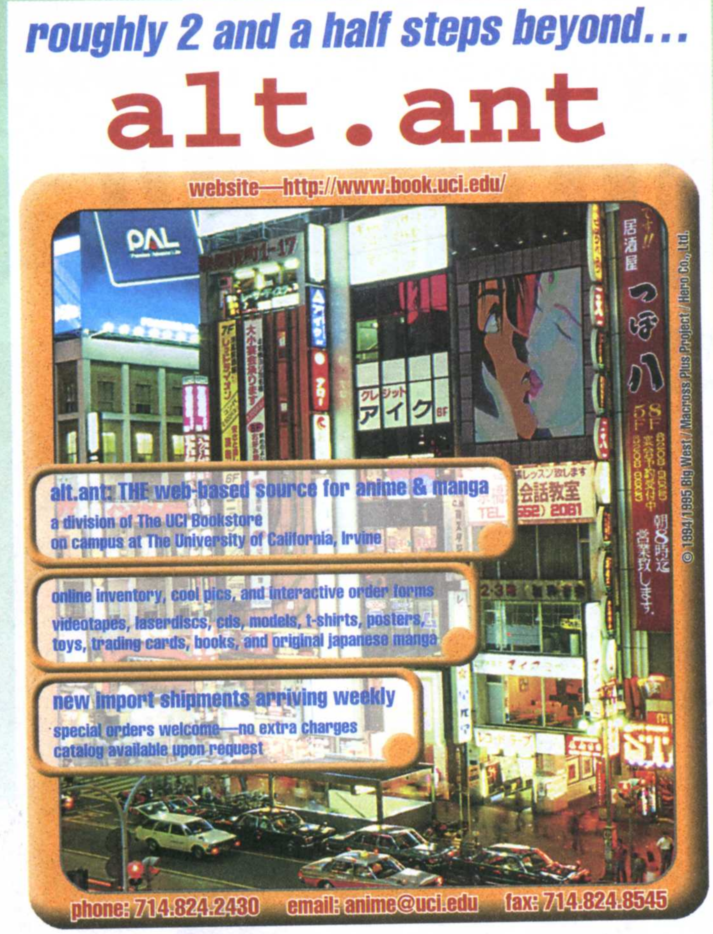
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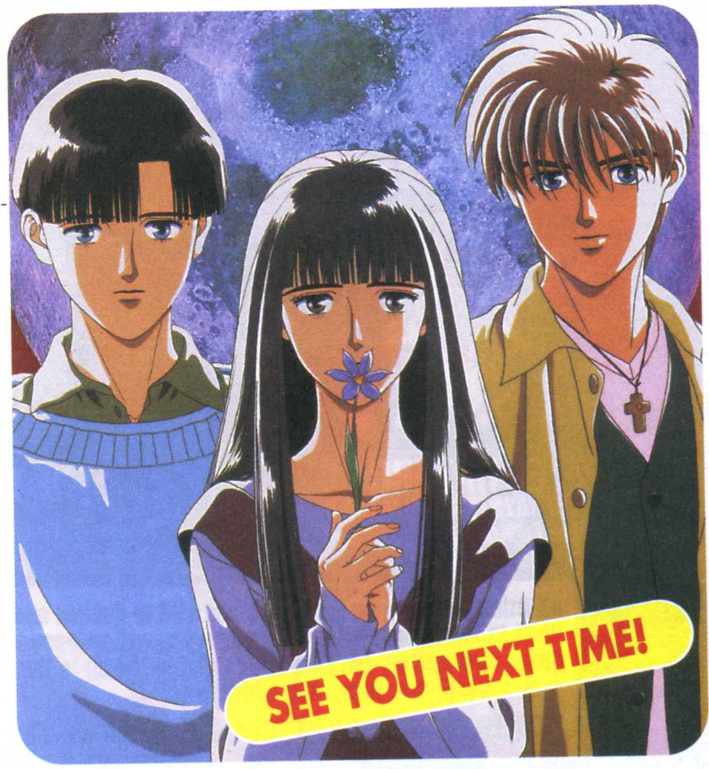
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